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MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

VOLUME LXVIII.



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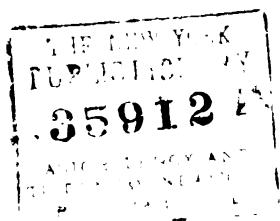
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SARAH GATES'S AFFAIR.

BY EUNICE BURGESS.

SHE taught school in Winterville, and went to the Baptist church. She was twenty-five, and had been teaching almost seven years, helping to support her widowed mother, who took two or three boarders to fill up the gap over which Sarah's salary refused to stretch. Sarah Gates had a long, sallow, large-featured face, and she wore glasses—uncompromising, heavy-rimmed spectacles—over her near-sighted eyes, and her ash-colored hair was drawn plainly back from her high forehead, and fastened in a small knob at a most unbecoming angle.

Beyond the salient facts few people knew anything about Sarah; still fewer, perhaps, ever thought that there was much of anything to know. She was very quiet and reserved, and had the reputation of being a good teacher; parents were apt to express satisfaction when their children got into Miss Gates's room; the children themselves were not enthusiastic about her—they seldom brought her flowers, and never strove for the honor of walking home from school with her. They were continually paying these compliments to Lillie Jenks, who taught in the same building and was Sarah's most intimate friend, although Lillie declared quite openly that she "didn't want a lot of young ones hanging round her."

It happened one summer that Sarah did not go to her Uncle Aaron's, in Vermont, with her mother, as usual. Uncle Aaron had been injured by a fall, and Silas was there with his family; and they gathered from between the lines of Aunt Corintha's letter that perhaps one guest would be more welcome than two.

"Lillie Jenks has been coaxing me to go to Moose Island with her," said Sarah, rather shamefacedly. "It's a place off the coast of Maine. Not a fashionable resort, of course,—neither of us could afford that,—but a quiet place, with beautiful scenery. It's near a very fashionable place. I think that is the chief charm to Lillie." Sarah laughed a little in a superior, indulgent way.

"I think it's a beautiful plan. I should miss you dreadfully, but I should admire to have you go," said Sarah's mother. "It would be a real change for you, and change is what young people need."

Sarah was struck by the adjective. She thought that she had quite ceased to think of herself as young.

"And there's the new parlor carpet that we didn't have," pursued her mother. "You can very well afford to go."

"I could do some botanizing," said Sarah, "and to study Natural History by the seashore would be of benefit to me."

Sarah never allowed herself anything but an instructive holiday.

She told Lillie that very day that she would go, and in the temporary absence of her flock, and the convenient deafness of the head master, Lillie executed a *pas seul* upon her chair of office as an expression of her feelings.

Lillie was as pretty as a pink and white complexion, corn-silk hair, and large blue eyes could make her, with only the drawbacks of so short an upper lip that her mouth would not stay shut, and irregular little teeth, which were, nevertheless, as white as milk.

It was thought quite remarkable that there should be a friendship between her and Sarah Gates; it was generally accounted for upon the theory of the attraction of opposites; but perhaps the fact that Sarah possessed unlimited patience for detailed accounts of compliments and conquests, and never had any of her own with which to counterbalance them, may have been a reason for it on one side, and the fact that Sarah had once taken Lillie home and nursed her through a dangerous typhoid fever, upon the other. Sarah always felt as if Lillie were her especial charge after that.

Lillie suggested certain additions to Sarah's wardrobe in view of this outing, and Sarah seriously contemplated having a white dress, but finally yielded to the dictates of prudence and had a light gray one. And she left her best bonnet at home, and packed much serious and improving literature.

Nevertheless, she felt it to be a reckless day when, after seeing her mother off for Vermont on an early train, she resigned the house to the latch-keys of old Mr. Sawyer and Henry Peckham—the two boarders, who were to get their meals wherever they could—and embarked, with Lillie, at the riotous hour of 7 A. M., upon a train which was to be exchanged for a steamer at the still more riotous hour of 7 P. M.

She found that the charms of Moose Island had been but feebly set forth by Lillie, who had, indeed, gathered them from acquaintances who valued its nearness to the haunts of fashion more highly than its flora or its sunsets. It was beautiful, but Sarah doubted whether it were going to be as instructive as she had hoped. The soft fogs steeped soul and body in a calm, and Sarah actually fastened flowers in her hair instead of classifying them, and instead of dissecting fishes she sat on the rocks and wrote poetry.

There was as yet only one other guest in the boarding-house where they were staying, which was a relief to Sarah, who was shy, although possessed of an unconfessed desire to make acquaintance with a new world.

When they had been there two days that other guest had not made his appearance, being absent on a fishing expedition; but it had not taken Lillie a third of that time to discover that he was a man of thirty, a college professor, something of a society man, and much sought after by the most exclusive set at the neighboring watering-place.

"Only one!" Lillie had murmured pensively, as she took down her yellow locks before the mirror the night after their arrival; "but it's a real Providence that with all these fogs I brought three white dresses. The angelic is the only style that will make any impression on him, I am convinced. Sarah, you won't let him suspect that I teach? You know I'm not ashamed of being poor, but to be a school-ma'am is so fatally unpicturesque."

On the third morning Lillie's pale blue morning-gown, which had cost her almost a month's salary, was not thrown away. Mr. Arnold Brett was not handsome, but *distingue*, Lillie said, with a determined chin, a straight, fastidious nose, and a pair of calm, inscrutable, gray-blue eyes; and he had a serious, deferential air, with which Sarah expressed satisfaction. Lillie admitted that it was a comfort to have a man pass you the butter as if he would die for you, but she feared there was going to be a little too much of his manner; it had the effect of making one's little jests fall flat; she was not sure that it had not, sometimes, the effect of a snub.

She was somewhat surprised that Sarah and he got on together. Sarah herself was altogether surprised at the evaporation of her shyness. She talked freely, allowing him to draw her out, and felt the delightful exhilaration of an ear-teased wanderer amid foreign jargons who hears suddenly his native speech. It was not, she said to herself, that she had never met a person of congenial tastes before; there was the Baptist minister who called on her often, and talked about the Latin poets; and she belonged to a class of young ladies who industriously read Shakespeare every Thursday evening (rather, perhaps, from a stern determination to improve their minds than from any enthusiasm for the immortal bard); and she had led Henry Peckham, the boarder who had been with them a long while, to prefer George Eliot's novels to the *Waverly Magazine*, and he now had ideas about them which she found worth listening to. But the pleasure which she found in this new acquaintance was not a congeniality of literary taste, or, indeed, of any taste. She might have said that he was *simpatica*, although it is probable that she would have thought that a frivolous and unworthy explanation, if she had ever heard the word; as it was, a period of severe self-examina-

tion—to which she was subject—threw no light upon the matter, but left her with the bewildering feeling that she had found a heaven and a new earth, and that it was a miracle.

Before the end of a week he was reading Browning's poetry to her, and they were getting at the heart of it together, down upon the rocks, while Lillie, posed upon a higher rock between him and the sky, knew that he took her in as well as looked at her whenever he raised his eyes, and was not unsatisfied. They talked together of the riddle of the painful earth, and if Sarah did not find it unraveled for her, she found it less a torment for the sharing—an experience which she had never sought before.

"Your straightforward way of looking at things puts them before me in a new light," he said to her, abruptly, one day. "How have you kept your eyes so clear?"

"By having but little to dazzle them, perhaps," answered Sarah, half sadly; but her heart sang for joy at the implied praise. And Arnold Brett watched the unwonted flush that came and went upon her sallow cheek with a curious interest.

"She's crude and undeveloped, but what an intense soul!" he said to himself, as he paced the graveled walk in view of the sea, with his solitary cigar, that night after the house was still. "I shouldn't wonder if she were a little morbid; so narrow a life would be apt to have that effect upon such a nature. But those near-sighted eyes of hers have a glance like a lance; it makes a man feel as if his soul were naked before her. I'm afraid it wouldn't be altogether comfortable in the long run. It's a relief after a certain amount of it just to look at that little one with the short upper lip. It's a better thing than one is apt to realize that there isn't any moral shut within the bosom of the rose. But she's a curious study—the plain one. I think I never saw anything human that was genuine before."

"I've found out all about him, Sarah!" cried Lillie, rushing into their room in a great state of excitement. "I was chilled when I came in from rowing, and I went to ask Mrs. Frisbie for some ginger-tea, and while it was being made I led the conversation, delicately, of course, to Mr. Brett. He has been here so many times and she's such a gossip I knew she would have found out, although he never says anything about himself. He's been very poor. I shouldn't

have thought that, should you? He belongs to an aristocratic family. I knew that manner was born, not made. His father lost all his money just after he entered college, and he has had a dreadful, lovely, interesting struggle to support a younger brother and two sisters. And he is getting into politics. Mrs. Frisbie has heard that he is very ambitious, and would prefer being a senator to being a college professor. That chin looks as if it hankered after the joy of the battle, doesn't it? and as if it wouldn't get left! Think of Washington, in the season, or, perhaps, a foreign mission!"

Sarah winced. She admitted to herself that there was something about Lillie—she did not call it vulgarity—that was becoming unendurable to her.

"Oh, and that isn't all. You know the Brimleys of L— are at Bar Harbor; immensely aristocratic, and no end of money. We saw them on the steamboat; a ponderous papa and mamma, and two tall daughters, plain and without a bit of style. There was something about the younger one, perhaps you'd call it high-breeding, and she had a real soft, sweet voice; well, she *can* have—she doesn't have to halloo at young ones! Mrs. Frisbie says Mr. Brett is on intimate terms with the family, and it is reported that he is very attentive to the younger daughter. I don't believe it; do you?"

"No," said Sarah, quietly, but with something of an effort.

"It doesn't look reasonable," pursued Lillie, "that he would stay here and hang round us every day for three weeks, except that one time when they sent for him, if there was anything particular about it, does it?"

"I don't think it does," said Sarah, after something more of an effort.

Lillie, in attempting to extinguish the light of the fitful kerosene, turned it higher, and as its glare fell upon Sarah's face she caught a strange expression on it.

"If she wasn't *pale*! I never would have believed it of Sarah Gates! But I've noticed that these deep people often haven't much common sense. I really believe she thinks it's *her*!" (Lillie regarded grammar as a necessary evil of the school-room, and turned her back upon it when she closed the door.)

Serene in the possession of plenty of common sense, she usually drifted off into

slumber as soon as her pretty head was comfortably settled upon its pillow. Neither refractory pupils, importunate parents, nor dense committee-men had ever kept her awake, but now she lay, hour after hour, with wide-open eyes, looking into the darkness.

"It's a pity she's near-sighted; she might have seen at once how he looked at me," meditated Lillie. "It would be awful to stand in her way. It would be only once in the world to her. He may not mean a thing—don't you be a fool, Lillie Jenks!—but if he does— How good she was to me when I was sick! Lillie Jenks, do you keep on; laugh at him, if it breaks your heart! I'm worried about Sarah."

Lillie saw the window-panes grow gray, and was cross to Sarah while they were dressing.

"I wish—yes, I really do wish she wasn't so awfully homely!" she said to herself, as Sarah's face looked over her shoulder into the mirror. "It's too ridiculous for her to think"—

"Sarah, they're coming here! they're really coming to this house to stay! If it were some people it would be called *pursuing* him. And he didn't know it—I don't think he did. He looked real vexed, or something, when Mrs. Frisbie told him. I asked, as innocently as if I never heard of them, if they were nice people, and that horrid Miss Prosser, with the imitation diamonds, said, 'Don't you know the Brimleys of S—?' Mamma isn't strong, it seems, and they've found Bar Harbor too crowded, and will stay here all the rest of the summer, if they like. Well, I'm glad I haven't had so much to say to Mr. Brett, lately. If he goes over to the enemy I sha'n't be left forlorn."

This self-congratulation of Lillie's referred to the fact that she had lately decoyed from an irate party, chiefly composed of girls, one of whom was the objectionable Miss Prosser, two adolescent youths, and reduced them to abject slavery. "They may be little, but they're all," she had quoted lightly to Sarah at the time of capture; but in the light of future possibilities their importance was magnified.

Sarah had made no comments upon this news, and Lillie tried in vain for a while to catch a glimpse of her face. When at length she did, it were an expression of confident

happiness. Two weeks had passed since Sarah had first heard of the Brimleys, and it was evident that they no longer possessed any terrors for her.

"She thinks he is really in love with her, and she *believes* in him!" said Lillie to herself. "O Sarah Gates, if you only knew! Sometimes I feel as if it were my duty to tell her. But it's like telling a child there isn't any Santa Claus; it hurts your feelings."

"It is a charmed island," said Mrs. Brimley of S—, who was ponderous of flesh, but gentle and deprecating of manner, being the exact counterpart of Mr. Brimley of S—, who was extremely small and slender of physique, but of a most pompous and weighty manner. "When the fog hides the main land, one can almost fancy that one has floated away from the old world with all its care and fret."

"And it is so beautifully green! 'It all looks fresh as if our Lord but yesterday had finished it,'" said Sibyl Brimley, in the voice which Lillie Jenks had characterized as "real sweet." "We don't wonder at you, Mr. Brett."

If she had a large nose, she had also a pair of soft, dove-like gray eyes, which looked half-shyly through long lashes at Arnold Brett. And she had a certain indefinable charm, made up of stateliness and maidenliness.

"I do wonder that you were able to endure such extraordinary people!" said the elder Miss Brimley, an oldish young lady of a faded bloneness, which suggested that its tints had not washed well, or had been too long exposed to the sun. "You must have quite suffered for some one to speak to. There are two such queer creatures near me at the table—school-teachers, I am sure. One of them talked to me this morning, quite as if I were an old friend. She confided to me that her friend was *real* gifted, and wrote poetry for the magazines; and that although so extremely superior, she quite approved of Professor Brett."

Brett winced, and the color came into his face, and he joined but slightly in the laugh that ran around the circle.

"I think I saw you talking to her yesterday; it is very good of you," said Sybil Brimley, softly, and with another dove-like glance.

"It is amazing that such people can be so

unconscious of their vulgarity," pursued Miss Brimley.

"I don't know that one can quite say they are vulgar," said Sybil. "The plain one is certainly too severe to be so. I fancy that the pretty one has some cleverness, obscured by—well, by her vulgarity, Mildred, if you will have it so."

Sybil had a pretty air of not being able to be as charitable as she wished, which was, perhaps, quite genuine, but which jarred upon Arnold Brett's sensibilities. He reflected that the feminine nature would have been more agreeable if the necessity for talking people over had been left out of it.

"Perhaps you found them interesting as a study of human nature," insisted Miss Brimley, fastening upon Brett her pale, dull eyes, which he had always found unpleasantly suggestive of being much keener than they looked.

"One usually prefers to study Nature in a place like this, unless the humanity be especially charming," said Brett, giving emphasis to his remark by a side glance at Sybil.

It was this glance that Sarah caught as she passed the piazza, with Lillie and the adolescents, on the way to the shore, and Lillie saw her shrink as from a blow. "I thought he might at least try to smooth things a little," said Lillie to herself; "but he hasn't. I didn't expect him to toe the mark squarely and introduce us to his friends; I knew it wasn't in him; but I did think he might manage by this time to have us thrown together so that an acquaintance would come about naturally; but instead of that he has ignored us entirely. Except for a little conversation about the weather yesterday, he has been unconscious of our existence. And Sarah's eyes have a hunted look, and months of physical suffering wouldn't have brought that pinched look about her mouth. I don't know whether I want worse to shake her or to cry over her! O Sarah Gates, if you only knew what I underwent for your sake this morning! To try to scrape acquaintance with the most supercilious of them all, the one with the largest nose, because I had a chance to even hint at the real state of things in the hope of touching her—well, the wisest have their foolish movements. Sarah, all of you, listen! I have had experience, I have observed: Nothing good ever comes from behind a large nose!"

Lillie's party was joined at the beach by a detachment of that very set of girls from whom she had stolen the two cavaliers, even the redoubtable Miss Prosser; having been snubbed by the Brimleys of S—, they had decided to make a common cause against the enemy; and their magnanimity had been rewarded by the advent of an older and more eligible gallant, of whom Lillie was too dispirited or too generous to dispute their possession.

They were to picnic on Frying Pan, an island which, in spite of its ignoble name, possessed a wild grandeur of scenery; a promontory of jagged, black rocks at one end, with a few bare, tempest-blasted trees, an angry surf below, and gulls screaming overhead, and everywhere "Nature encamped in a mighty solitude."

"Sarah, do hold up your head!" said Lillie, in an energetic aside, as they landed on the island. "You will set them all to gossiping. Listen; I'll tell you something." Lillie hesitated, and seemed to struggle with an impediment in her throat. "Mr. Brett kissed me twice! It was that day I slipped on the rocks. He caught me in his arms, my head was on his shoulder. He apologized, but what he said, Sarah, would have been equivalent to a declaration from some men. He was afraid afterwards that he had committed himself. He contemplated flight; he got his friends over here to protect him, I think now. I tried to tell you. I thought it might be better to, but I couldn't. He didn't care anything for me, you understand; it's only his way."

Lillie did not stay to observe the effect of her words; she developed a sudden gayety, and completely subjugated the new arrival without any apparent effort; and all day Nature and the sea-gulls found their solemn harmonies sadly disturbed by human frivolity.

"You have forgotten your friend, Miss Gates," said Miss Prosser, severely, as they were returning to the slip where the boat lay. (Her temper had been sorely tried.)

"She must have stayed behind on the rocks," cried Lillie, and darted off in search of her, refusing all offers of escort.

She hastened, because the others were waiting, and to prevent their gossip. Sarah was moping somewhere, and they knew it. She had not the vaguest fear of anything worse than that; but after seeking and calling in vain among the rocks, she suddenly

discovered Sarah standing upon a rock only large enough to give her a foothold, between which and the shore the waves were tumbling. Lillie scrambled over the rocks, careless of bruised feet and torn hands.

"Sarah Gates! are you crazy? Don't you know the tide is coming in, and you will be swept away in five minutes?"

Sarah turned towards her a dazed face, in which a glimmer of fright was just appearing, and held out appealing hands.

With all her strength Lillie pushed a great stone over, hoping to bridge the chasm; but it fell into it with a crash, and the rock on which Sarah stood tottered.

Lillie raised her voice and called for help, in the hope that some one had disregarded her behest and followed her. There was a startling echo from the cliff above, and the gulls screamed, wheeling over their heads; but no human voice answered.

There was drift-wood lying among the rocks, and Lillie found two narrow planks which might bear Sarah's weight. She threw them across to Sarah's rock, standing herself upon one which was drenched and slippery, and held out her hand.

"Step out upon that," she cried, imperatively. "You can reach my hand in a minute. Hold tight, and don't be afraid!"

In another moment Sarah stood beside her, drenched and shivering.

"How could you be so weak and wicked, Sarah Gates?" cried Lillie, angrily.

"I don't think I quite realized," said Sarah, with a shudder. "But I felt as if I were in a nightmare, and I couldn't bear it. Nothing seemed real; everything that had happened, and the future—even God—seemed a great, black emptiness! And I suffered horribly. I could have borne the first—his neglecting and seeming ashamed to speak to me. I couldn't see how I could have been mistaken about his caring for me, but I knew that I must have been, then. I could despise myself without blaming him, and I could still believe in him; but when you told me that— Lillie, I thought he was different."

"They never are," said Lillie, concisely.

She parried lightly the inquisitiveness of Miss Prosser and the others, which Sarah's reviving conscientiousness forbade her to do, and carried herself gayly still, although Sarah sometimes looked at her with reproachful eyes, and wondered if life never had a serious side for Lillie Jenks.

The next morning Sarah received a telegram with the intelligence that her mother was very ill, and wished her to come to her at once.

Lillie insisted upon accompanying her, in spite of her feeble remonstrances, and it was she who packed and made all the preparations, while Sarah lay utterly prostrated upon the bed.

"It's a judgment upon me, Lillie," she said. "I know she will die! I have been weak and wicked, as you said. But meeting him made a new world for me; no one had ever seemed to understand me before."

"Don't talk about him! Don't ever mention him to me again!" cried Lillie, with sudden wrath.

And Sarah was meekly silent, her eyes following Lillie with a wondering expression.

Mrs. Brimley of S— came herself to the door to offer condolences to Sarah, and even Miss Brimley sent a prettily sympathetic message.

"It's always the way with those people," said Lillie, bitterly. "If you're in trouble they can be pitying and patronizing; it suits them; they're used to it. They're going to get rid of us, too. And if we should ever meet them again they wouldn't know us, unless we were on their poor list."

"I can't think what makes you so hard, Lillie," said Sarah. "It isn't like you."

"I'm going to leave you before you get to Brandon," said Lillie, in the cars the next day, beginning to gather up her traveling wraps. "At the next station I can take the stage to the village where my cousin Phoebe lives. She has been wanting me to visit her, and it will be better for you to have your mother all to yourself. She is not sick at all." Lillie fixed her eyes on Sarah's, calmly. "The post-office clerk helped me to get up the telegram. I thought a shock was the only thing for you. You'll live to thank me, if you don't now."

"Lillie! Lillie!" cried Sarah; but the car had stopped, the conductor had shouted a name, and Lillie's fluffy, corn-silk bangs, and stylish hat, and bewildering draperies, with their background of dilapidated country station, were already a vanishing vision.

In the autumn Lillie learned, through an acquaintance who lived in S—, that Arnold Brett was engaged to Sybil Brimley; and she told Sarah of it with a kind of savage

satisfaction, or so it seemed to Sarah, and sneered fiercely when Sarah said meekly that she "hoped he would be happy."

Lillie seemed strange; she had changed very much, Sarah thought; or perhaps it was only that she had begun to feel her uncongeniality more.

Sarah herself was much the same, except that she, perhaps, went oftener to prayer-meeting.

It was little more than a year after that Arnold Brett went one day out to Winterville on the train. Lillie had entered the car just behind him, but she tucked herself away in a corner and looked at him, herself unobserved.

He had differed in politics from Mr. Brimley of S—; he had, indeed, been a successful candidate for office in the party which that gentleman believed to be bent upon accomplishing the ruin of the country; and the result was that Sybil, who, with the rest of her family, felt it to be not quite the thing for gentlemen to mix themselves with politics, in their present condition, gently but firmly declined to fulfill her promise of marriage.

And now, whether from pique or from a taste for odd things—such as one had for caviare, or curious coins, or old china—he could not himself quite determine, he was going out to Winterville to see Sarah Gates. She had made an impression upon him that had never quite faded. He half-acknowledged to himself, also, that her strong, keen vision would keep him from shams, towards which he was conscious of gravitating. There might be people who would wonder, even ridicule; but a man took a wife for himself. And her face haunted him as it had looked when he began to show her that he had not meant anything. To move an intense individuality like that had some effect upon a man; if it had been the little frivolous one, now—

"There she is this minute!" as at this point of his reflections he happened to turn his head, and caught sight of Lillie. "How faded and worn! Apt to be the way with girls of that complexion. I suppose she works hard, too; about as fit as a butterfly. It gives my conscience a twinge to remember how I flirted with her. But there was no danger of breaking her heart; she laughed at me all the time. If I had been serious I wonder if she would have laughed. Ridiculous to remember how much time

I've spent puzzling over that problem since! Well, I'm glad I did keep a level head; she wouldn't do much towards furthering a man's prospects in life, and there is nothing more fatal to a man than a little fool for a wife. I'll go and talk to her.

Lillie had an airy little toss of her head and a half-sweet, half-mocking smile all ready for him. He had meant to utter some light badinage, but to his surprise he found his tongue faltering under her gaze. What was the power which this "little fool" had over him?

"I am going to Winterville. Shall I find Miss Gates at home, do you think?" he said abruptly, and with a great effort.

"Oh, yes, Sarah's at home. She's almost well, now. You haven't heard? Of course not. She has been very sick with typhoid fever; she wasn't expected to live. But she's well now; and she's going to be married next month to Henry Peckham. He boards at her house.

Brett heard himself murmur that he hoped she would be happy.

"She ought to; she's a nice girl," remarked Lillie. "She looks pretty now, too, for her; her hair was shaved off, and now it has come out in little rings all over her head, and it's awfully becoming to her."

Brett didn't hear about the hair; he was busied with his own inexplicable mingling of chagrin and relief, and a growing impulse to do a mad thing. How pretty was the increasing seriousness and shyness in Lillie's eyes? *Would she laugh at him?*

They alighted together at the Winterville station.

"That is the way to Sarah's," said Lillie, pointing gravely.

"I think on the whole I would rather walk home with you, if you will let me," he said, and was disgusted to find himself blushing like a school-boy.

She assented gravely, and they walked on in a leaf-strewn, tree-bordered pathway, so narrow that two could not walk abreast. She walked so fast that he suspected, with a keen pang, that she wished to run away from him.

"Lillie, Lillie!" he called; and she turned and faced him wonderingly. "I will never marry any woman but you. You may believe it or not, but I have never loved any but you."

"I shall never try to doubt what it is so sweet to believe," said the "little fool."

LETTERS.

BY IRIS.

SUCH a little thing—a letter!
Yet so much it may contain;
Written thoughts and mute expressions,
Full of pleasure, fraught with pain.

When our hearts are sad at parting,
Comes a gleam of comfort bright
In the mutual promise given,—
“We will not forget to write.”

Plans and doings of the absent,
Scraps of news we like to hear,
All remind us, e'en though distant,
Kind remembrance keeps us near.

Yet sometimes a single letter
Turns the sunshine into shade,
Chills our efforts, clouds our prospects,
Blights our hopes and makes them fade.

Messengers of joy or sorrow,
Life or death, success, despair,
Bearers of affection's wishes,
Greeting kind or loving prayer.

Prayer or greeting, were we present,
Would be felt, but half unsaid;
We can write, because our letters—
Not our faces—will be read.

Who has not some treasured letters,
Fragments choice of others' lives;
Relics, some, of friends departed,
Friends whose memory still survives?

Touched by neither time nor distance,
Will these words unspoken last;
Voiceless whispers of the present,
Silent echoes of the past!

OLD MR. CONROY'S LADY COMPANION.

BY F. G. BARBER.

SEPTEMBER 13TH, 1883.—I am seventy to-day, and feel very depressed and out of sorts. The fact is, I am a lonely, disappointed old man—not through any fault of mine, but all owing to Dick's confounded obstinacy and selfishness—two of the most abominable vices that disfigure human nature.

To begin with, I am the head of a good old English family which has never been accustomed to be put out of its way or worried in any matter. Go into the old church down below there in the village, and you will find a chapel almost as big as the church itself—a chapel with its walls covered all over with brasses and florid old mural tablets, its floor cumbered by flat-topped tombs whereon lie knights in effigy, and its stained glass windows bright with the herald's art. Whose family do these things glorify? Mine. Whose name furnishes a sign for the village inn? Mine. Whose house is “the house” of the whole country-side? Mine.

It is a home fit for a duke,—large, stately, many-gabled, ivy-clad,—the outgrowth of wealth and luxury enjoyed by my forefathers for many generations.

As to the park, it is as nice a little park as

you will find in all England; none of your jumped-up enclosures, but a thoroughly well-timbered, well-chosen bit of upland and hollow, with broad acres beyond.

And I married well, too; for, though I held a good stretch of land before that event, it brought me more. She was the Honorable Priscilla Phipps, a trifle needy, perhaps, but possessed of a pedigree that was like an Atlantic cable for length. My marriage was an illustration of how judgment can triumph over sentiment.

I don't know whether I have mentioned it, but I am firm, astonishingly firm. My heart had no chance with my head; and it was just because of this that I was able to give up all thought of Connie, and marry Priscilla. Let me see, did I speak about Connie before? No. Oh, well, she was a sort of governess at a house where I visited when I was a youngster.

Ah, but she was pretty—exquisitely, absolutely pretty! I am positive about it, because I am a judge of that kind of thing—I always was. I know the points in a pretty woman just as well as I know them in a horse. Why, I am fond of them now—women, I mean—and can make myself pleasant to them, too, I can tell you!

Well, the drawback to Connie was this—she was just nobody. She was the daughter of people who came from nowhere, and did not even know where that was. She was poor, as a matter of course; but I think I could have overlooked that objection. It was the “nobodyism” that settled the matter. Yet I loved her dearly, and, had I been a selfish man, should have married her. As it was, I remembered my position, and took Priscilla.

From this you will see that it is no idle boast when I say that unselfishness and firmness are the two strongest points in my character.

One day I told Priscilla about Connie, and she told me about a cavalry officer who proposed to her with only two hundred pounds a year; and we both laughed till the butler came and asked if we were ill.

I was very happy with Priscilla. She always adopted my views, did just what I told her to do, and went my way,—not because I exercised my authority over her, but because she felt that I knew best. She was a most sensible woman, and so of course I lost her just as Dick was born.

I was a most indulgent father. I used to toss the baby for five minutes together. It was a perverse baby, and grew into a troublesome little boy. By and by came the school-days and fresh disappointments.

I sent Dick to Eton, and begged him to be careful about the companions he made. What was the result? He formed but one fast friendship, and that was with a fellow by the name of Jack Hobson, the son of a manufacturer of starch or mustard, or something of the sort, while he was at some pains to give the cold shoulder to a son of my neighbor, Lord Esk. Of course I argued the point with Dick, but it was not of any use. He merely said that Hobson was a “brick,” and Esk’s son a “cad,” and told me he meant to choose his own friends.

Later on came the question of college; and I was fool enough to ask Dick which he would prefer, Oxford or Cambridge. He immediately chose the junior University. I explained to him that it was more Radical in its tendencies than Oxford; but this did not move him in the least, and only elicited the remark, “Bully for Cambridge!”—an untranslatable vulgarism of American origin. Well, he went to Cambridge. He did more—he went to the deuce.

He never took any kind of degree, but

went for boating, boxing, and developing his muscle at the expense of his mind. Added to all this, Hobson turned up at Dick’s college almost as soon as he arrived there; and Dick spent the whole of his time with this precious chum. The whole of his time, did I say? Well, not quite, as you will presently discover.

It was about half through one of his terms that the blow fell; for it was a blow, I can tell you, because I was really very fond of Dick. You see, he was an uncommonly good-looking young fellow, and could ride well, shoot well, dance well, and sing well, and was at all times good company; in fact, he was remarkably like what I was at the same age, except as to obstinacy; and where he gets that from is more than I can tell.

The blow came in the form of a letter, and a letter from Dick. It was a rascally letter; it—but there—I’ll read it to you. Just listen:—

“CHRIST’S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

“DEAR DAD.—Hobson’s people have been staying here for a time, and I have been showing his sister about the place. She is the prettiest and altogether the most scrumptious little girl I ever met, and awfully sensible, too; so I asked her to go to a wedding with me, and she has been good enough to agree. The old people seem very pleased, and so is Hobson. I propose to bring her down for your blessing, and all that sort of thing, next Saturday. I’m sure you’ll like her, dad—in fact, if I wasn’t sure I shouldn’t propose to marry, because, of course, I know that if you were to cut up rough and stop supplies I should be regularly cornered.

“Always yours affectionately, DICK.

“P. S.—I forgot to say that old Hobson’s business had bust up, and that Hobson—my friend—will have to go out as tutor. So the sooner I can marry the sister the better for her.”

I dare say you think I flew into a passion when I got this letter, but I didn’t. I have a wonderful command of my temper; it is most remarkable. I just passed the facts of the case in review, as it were, and their enormity fairly staggered me.

I said to myself, Dick proposes to unite himself to a girl without breeding and without money, and whose plebeian name is tainted with bankruptcy. Will you as a father sanction such folly? Never!

My mind was made up on the instant, and I wrote to Dick by return of post. I kept the draft of my letter, and here it is:—

“STANBURY MANOR.

“DEAR DICK.—I have just received your idiotic letter. If you like to give up the young woman you mention at once and forever, I shall be happy to see you at home again. If you do not give her up, my doors will be closed to you from this day forth, and not only my doors, but my check-book. I hope you understand.

“Your affectionate but outraged

“FATHER.”

I dispatched this letter with full confidence that it would bring Dick to his senses, because I felt certain the boy loved me, and reckoned on his sense of filial duty. It is the mistake I have made all through life—the giving to others credit for the same feelings of unselfishness and pliancy that I myself possess. My faith in human nature was destined to receive another shock. The only answer Dick sent to my affectionate appeal was this short note:—

“CHRIST'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

“DEAR DAD.—As you call on me to make my election between love and seven hundred pounds a year—my present allowance—I must choose the former. In the circumstances I should be a cad to do anything else. At the same time I'm very sorry to upset your apple-cart, for you have always behaved like a brick to me. Good-by, dad!

“Always yours affectionately,

“DICK.

There's pig-headed obstinacy for you, and selfishness, too! Fancy a young fool thrusting aside parental affection and his bread and butter, all because he must have his own way! Well, he had it. It cost me many a pang, but I did my duty. I shut Dick out from my hearth, and thrust him from my mind. I never—or very rarely—thought of him at all.

SEPTEMBER 1ST, 1884.—About six months after I had closed accounts with Dick, and some three after my seventieth birthday, everything began to go wrong. The gout in my right leg became positively excruciating, the village swarmed with poachers, there was swindling going on in the stables—

which I could not get out to see after—and the servants got stupider and stupider, and selfish and obstinate beyond all belief.

Nobody reminded me of my medicine, or tried to amuse me. It was like being buried alive. I tried to mend matters by engaging a private secretary—in fact, I had a succession of them—but they were all either fearfully slow and dull, or bent on having their own way; and I sacked them one after the other.

After this I got a notion that I should like a young-lady nurse and companion, and mentioned the matter to the parson. I made sure he would have a fit. His eyes crossed, he became purple—indeed his symptoms were so very alarming that I felt justified in slapping his back; and I did it so well that I slapped him clean out of his chair.

When he was better, he gasped out he was afraid he could not help me; and then, when I had glared at him and asked him “Why not?” he stuttered out,—

“I—I—I don't think it would be proper.”

An old “buffle-head,” as Dick used to say. But that's the world all over—hard, censorious, cold!

My other neighbors were just as silly; and all agreed that if I insisted on being waited on by a young woman, I must get an old one into the house as well.

So I sent for Maria. Maria is a second cousin of mine; she is almost stone-deaf, and cannot see without her spectacles, which she is always losing. She never comes down to breakfast until lunch-time, and always goes to bed at dinner time; consequently she does not bore one much.

When she was fairly installed with me, and had begun to feel at home; I advertised for my young-lady nurse and companion, avoiding any disclosure of my sex by merely describing myself as an invalid. I arranged that Gould, the bookseller at Stanbury, should receive the answers. They came in shoals, for the salary I offered was good; and in cases where I thought the girls might be nice, I sent for them to come and see me, and paid all expenses. Gould seemed to think all was not as it should be, and looked quite frightened every time I saw him on the subject.

The sixth maiden who came was “Miss Right,” and I closed with her off-hand. She brought only two letters of recommendation; but one was from a cabinet minister,

and the other from a bishop. She was "the sort of thing to sit next," as Dick would say, with small fine features, large earnest eyes, a delicate yet not unhealthy color, nut-brown hair, and a compact little figure. She was in all respects a lady, had a sweet, low voice, and made no pretence of being anybody in particular—by which I mean that she did not tell any yarns about aristocratic connections, sad reverses of fortune, etc. I do not believe she would have come, if Maria had not been with me. Her name, she told me, was Constance Denham. She came down here with her traps about a week after we had arranged terms, and fell into our ways at once.

It was just about tea-time when she arrived, and, on hearing that tea was nearly due, she whipped off her wraps in a twinkling; and came down from her room in time to make it. And she made it just as I like it made. Maria was rather stiff with her at first, but she managed to make the old lady hear without squealing or roaring at her, and that placed Miss Denham on a pinnacle from which she never afterwards fell.

I never knew a girl fit into one's life as she did. She always remembered my medicine and my gouty leg. When one wanted to be quiet, she would bring out some sort of work and sit as still as a mouse; or, if cheerfulness was at a premium, play and sing until the "blues" were put to flight. And one of the most extraordinary things about her was that she knew all Dick's favorite songs and sang them perfectly.

It was a goodly sight to see her scratching about among the flowers before breakfast in her deliciously fresh trim morning-gowns, attended by a retinue of enslaved and devoted dogs, and singing bright snatches of song to herself. Equally pleasant was it to have her sit by me on the terrace, while I read the day's lesson from the *Times*, and to note the ingenuity with which she extracted amusement from that somewhat solemn journal. She often accompanied the most ponderous leading articles with quaint little moralizings of her own.

Our afternoons were mostly spent in taking long drives, in which, out of deference to Miss Denham's passionate love of the rural, we always avoided towns and large villages. A far-reaching view from any lofty hill would move my small companion like a strain of music or a pathetic story; and the more she felt the less she said. It grew at

last to be a rule with us to pull up on reaching any vantage-ground, and to sit and study the distant scene in a silence broken only by the clinking of the bits and creaking of the harness, while the horses themselves pricked up their ears and seemed to listen, and the discreet groom stood motionless as a statue.

And when the evening came what a girl for games! Whist, cribbage, chess, backgammon—she knew them all, and not only played them well, but could lose gracefully when she played with Maria. One morning, when my leg was easier, I challenged her to billiards; and hang me if she didn't win!

Later on I made another discovery—Miss Denham could ride. I had limped across to the stables with a hand on her plump little shoulder, and had been so much struck with her knowledge of my nag's ways, and with her admiration of a side-saddle that poor Dick had bought for girl-visitors, that I then and there arranged to ride into Stanbury with her.

Perhaps you wonder how I can ride with a gouty foot? Well, I don't put it in the stirrup, I let it dangle.

The ride was a great success. She sat Dick's chestnut as if she had been made for it; her color rose, and her eyes danced with life and joyousness. There was only one word which would describe her, and that was the word poor old Dick used in describing that Hobson girl—"scrumptious." She was not one of your flat-chested, round-shouldered equestrians, and her habit fitted her like a glove.

But in the midst of my admiration, it struck me as confoundedly curious that she should have any habit at all. So I asked her point-blank how it was. Directly I had done this I felt sorry, for her face fell, and she looked troubled. She rode on in silence for a few minutes, looking straight between her horse's ears, and with something very like a tear in her eyes. Then she said very softly:—

"Mr. Conroy, I can't tell you—I really cannot. I know you have a right, after all your kindness to me, to hear a little more of my past life than my reference told you, but to explain about the habit carries me back to days I would rather not think about. Please don't ask about those times; and please don't be cross."

Well, you may be sure I did not press my question after that; and she soon brightened up again.

After this ride I kept my curiosity to myself, and tried to forget that either of us had a past to recall.

And time stole on, and "Miss Denham" was, by agreement between Maria and myself, entirely superseded by "My dear," or "My dear Connie"—which latter phrase pleased me well, as it reminded me of my plebeian sweetheart of long ago.

Some of the neighbors wagged their old heads at me, and talked about "old Mr. Conroy's lady companion," but I did not care; nor did Connie, either, for the simple reason that she was innocent of all offense.

I was much amused at the way in which the wives and daughters of my neighbors treated my favorite when they paid me state visits, and their efforts to patronize or snub her as a superior upper servant. Connie seemed a little puzzled at first as to what *role* she should assume, until I made it clear to her that she was to meet all comers as an equal. After this she treated some of the more inflated feminine potentates to such well-directed shafts of sarcasm as speedily reduced them to frigid and distant politeness.

My neighbors' sons behaved differently from their wives and daughters, for within a week of Connie's arrival they began to evince extraordinary interest in my health, and would sit with me for the half-hour together. On these occasions Miss Denham disappeared at the earliest opportunity, leaving me to extract what amusement I could from the young men's piteous efforts to make believe that they cared a brass farthing whether I was alive or dead.

You may judge what I thought of Connie's good sense and warm heart, when I tell you that I went over Dick's affair with her from beginning to end, and found her sympathy itself. Why, the tears came into her eyes, and she was not only sorry for me—she was sorry for Dick as well! The only trait in her character which disappointed me was her inability to see why I could not have Dick back; her obtuseness on this point almost amounted to obstinacy.

I showed her a photograph of Dick, and the dear little soul looked at it quite affectionately. It proved how thoroughly she had identified herself with the family.

There was one thing about Connie which puzzled me immensely—she wrote pages every day to some unknown correspondent, and always posted her letters herself. In a general way I am not in the least inquisitive,

but I must confess to having been anxious to know why Connie wrote so much and so often. I asked Maria if she had observed the letter-writing mania, and found she had; but, when I inquired the meaning of it, she became aggravatingly deaf. She twisted the word "meaning," into "cleaning," "weaning," "beaming," and a score of other absurdities.

But I ferreted the thing out without her. I came to the conclusion that there was a lover in the case, and charged Connie on suspicion. Her responsive blushes were something to see. She turned red, rose up from her chair in a hurry, and gave me three doses of medicine one after the other in quick succession and before I had time to protest; but she looked so pretty while she was doing it that I forgave her, and bore no malice.

By and by we talked the matter over confidentially, she kneeling down beside me, looking proud, pleased, and shy by turns.

I think I must have made a good listener, or she would never have found courage to tell me how handsome he was, how good, how clever, how truly fond of her, etc. He was, it appeared, a sort of secretary to an M. P., and was saving up for the express purpose of making my little favorite a home.

You will scarcely credit me when I say that I was old fool enough not to relish the idea, and that I felt quite jealous of Mr. Secretary; but so it was. Still I kept the fiend in the background, and went so far as to say that I would use my influence to do the beloved one a good turn—an offer which gained me a kiss on the extreme crown and centre of my bald head—for May may kiss December, and Maria was present.

There was one question I was forced to ask, although it was an awkward one. It was clear that Connie's lover had good taste; but was he a gentleman? This was a point I felt bound to be satisfied upon, and I hinted my thirst for knowledge on this particular head as delicately as I could.

The dear little soul took it all in good part, and gave me a perfectly satisfactory answer. She assured me that he bore a most extraordinary resemblance to myself. It was such a relief to me to hear this that I grew quite interested in the little romance, and proposed that the secretary should run down and pay Connie a visit from Saturday to Monday.

When I said this, she became the most bewitching picture of confusion, and produced a small array of weak-minded little arguments against the scheme, until I, brushing all polite fibs aside, commanded her, by virtue of our mutual relations of employer and employed, to write an invitation that very afternoon, and to fix Saturday, September 13th, my seventy-first birthday, for the visit. When she left me to do my bidding, my spirits sank to zero; for had I not pledged myself to help this unknown young man to rob me at the earliest possible date of the one solitary being who could in any way atone for the loss of Dick? Poor Dick! Why on earth could not he have fallen in love with Connie, or somebody like her, instead of that girl of Hobson's?

Saturday came—I mean the Saturday for the secretary's visit—and found Connie in a state of the most intense though suppressed excitement. She forgot to put sugar in my coffee at breakfast, she put hot water on Maria's cactus, and she made several attempts to read the *Times* upside down. To her habitually affectionate manner there was added a strange, fluttering timidity.

It seemed to me that there was something very unusual in her way of looking at me, and I thought I detected an exultant gleam in her large soft eyes whenever they met mine—a look such as a child's eyes might have who is possessed of a secret that it is burning to divulge, but has been drilled in to keeping back.

The young man was due at Stanbury at

six o'clock, P. M.; and when the proper time arrived I packed Miss Connie off to the station in the brougham to meet him, and then sat down on the terrace in the dusk and quiet of the autumn evening to wait the lovers' return.

And, as I sat and thought of Dick, wondering where he was, I felt the burden of my threescore years and ten. I do not think I ever remember such a heavy dew as there was that evening, for I felt a great drop of it upon my face.

It seemed to me sitting there in solitude, as if the fair and restful scene, though so familiar, had gained a strange new touch of sadness. Even my favorite Scotch firs looked mournful and solemn with their background of delicate primrose-colored sky.

By and by the carriage flashed up the avenue, swung round the corner, and pulled up at the hall door, paused there a minute's space amid the champing of bits, and then bowled past me to the stables.

A little later I saw two figures mount the terrace steps and come towards me. They came through the mist that had risen from the lawn—nearer, nearer, nearer yet; and I, looking up, saw that these twain were hand in hand, and let my eyes travel, until they rested on the face of Dick.

No doubt they thought I should be surprised; but I was not in the least—no, not even when Dick introduced me to Miss Constance Denham Hobson. I just got up, shook Dick's hand, kissed Connie, and marched them in to dinner.

THE MOON.

IMAGINE ourselves at the moon, looking down at the revolving earth. We should see on the west side new continents and seas continually appearing, hastening across the face of the earth, and disappearing round the east side. As the waters pass from the western edge to the middle of the face of the earth, they draw nearer to the moon than the centre of the earth, and in consequence are drawn towards the moon more quickly than the earth itself. They cannot leave the earth, and can only obey this impulse by moving round towards the moon more quickly than the earth on which they rest. When they have passed

the middle of the earth's face, they are now moving away from the moon, and the action is reversed, and all the velocity given to them before, relatively to the earth, on which they rest, is taken away. We see thus that we may naturally expect the water directly below the moon to be moving from west to east more rapidly than the earth on which it rests; and as we go east and west from that point, the motion of the water will become less. The same will be true of the water furthest away from the moon. We may thus consider the ocean as a stream of water flowing round the earth, generally at the same rate as the earth below it, but

sometimes slower and sometimes faster. Where it moves faster it will be shallower. Thus, we may expect the sea to be shallow at the point below the moon, and that furthest away from the moon; and as successive places are brought, by the rotation of the earth, below or away from the moon, they have low tide, and intermediate to these, of course, high tide. Such is a rough explanation of the tides. There are other circumstances to be taken into consideration, as, for instance, the fact that the seas cannot flow freely, but are impeded by friction. The general effect of it all is, that looking thus down on the earth from the moon, we do not see the low tide immediately below us, but to the west, in the western half of the earth's face; and the high tides are not on the western and eastern edges of the face, but are round behind the western edge and the other, between the point immediately below us and the eastern edge of the earth.

Now, the moon hastens the waters in the western half of the earth's face, as we thus view it, and retards those in the eastern half, tending to make the former move faster, and the latter slower, than the land on which they rest. But the tidal heap is in the eastern half, and therefore, on the average, more water will be in the eastern half than in the western. Thus more water is retarded than hastened. If as much water were hastened as retarded, these motions would neutralize each other; but being more retarded than hastened, there results a slight average retarding of the waters of the ocean, causing them to move round more slowly than the earth, and so, relatively to it, to flow slowly westward. Of course, owing to lands hindering the free flow of the sea, innumerable local currents are produced, which in their backward and forward flow nearly neutralize each other; but as a final result of all these motions we find a slow westerly current in the ocean, due to the moon's action.

This current does not move without friction against the lands it meets, or the deeper waters of the ocean over which it flows. By this friction, as the earth is revolving in the opposite direction, it tends to check the rotation of the earth. Just as the brake upon a windlass checks the rotation of the windlass and the lowering of the weight, so this friction against the earth acts as a brake, gradually stopping it. If we set a celestial

globe spinning, we can soon stop it by gently laying a finger upon it. So the moon, as it were, lays a fairy finger on our earth's equator, and, light as the touch is, the earth's rotation will in time be stopped. Ultimately, the earth will constantly present the same face to the moon just as the moon does now to it.

There is a curious action in compensation upon the moon, which admits of an easy explanation. Owing to the tidal heaps of water, the general attraction of the earth on the moon is not directed to the centre of the earth, but to a point a very little distance from it on the tidal axis, which points, as we have shown above, eastward of the moon. Roughly speaking, the moon moves in a circle round the centre of the earth from west to east; but it is thus continually pulled, not to the centre of the earth, but to a point a little towards the direction in which the moon moves. Now, when we have a stone at the end of a string, and wish to make it whirl round faster, we move our hand in a little circle, pulling the string continually, not to the centre of the circle in which the stone whirls, but to a point a little more in the direction in which the stone is moving. Thus, the loss of rotation in the earth is compensated for by a more rapid motion of the moon, which, in consequence, will fly further from the earth, and describe a larger orbit. This change, however, is practically too small to be observed.

We have shown above how the moon produces a tide on the earth. Supposing the moon to possess an ocean, what kind of tides will our earth produce in it? The mass of the earth is eighty-eight times that of the moon. If, instead of one moon, we had eighty-eight such clustered together, each evidently producing a tide, there would result on the whole a tide eighty-eight times as high as at present. We can thus see how the tides in the moon, being produced by the earth would be far greater than those we have. By calculation which we could hardly explain in an elementary manner, we come to the result, that the tides in the moon would be about forty times as high as those on the earth, or about one hundred and ninety feet high on the average. A rather surprising result. Such a tide would sweep a large part of the world clean, twice a day, and mountain climbing far from being a luxury for tourists only, would be a necessity for all.

RALPH SINGLETON'S PROTEGE.

BY MATTHEW S. VINTON.

CHAPTER XX.

THREE years passed away, and during the time Julia lived with her secret continually before her. Continually before her, and yet never for a moment did it seem to her that she had a right to make it known. Sometimes when Lucia's well-aimed sarcasms—not to say meannesses—seemed unbearable, her proud spirit would rise up triumphantly, and her eager lips tremble to tell the story that she knew so well. But something was continually whispering in her ear, "Not yet! not yet! The time to speak has not come!"

So she waited patiently, although at times wondering why those about her were so ignorant of what to her was more than life. But Miss Dempster, meanwhile, neither slumbered nor slept. Had Julia been less carefully guarded, she would not have paused after her first attempt to rid the family of her. No one knew this better than Mr. Westerly, although the true cause of it was far from being plain to him. As it was, her powerlessness made her irritable, and, in the long run, a much more disagreeable enemy to meet day after day.

She was forever hinting, in Julia's presence, about people getting above their stations; "above themselves," as she used to express it, adding often, in one form and another, yet still as a truism, "that a glow-worm never could be made a star, or a vulgar thistle-blow a white rose. Birth would always declare itself whether in a high or low station."

These words to the sensitive, proud young creature—often spoken in the presence of strangers—were like so many coals of fire dropped upon her heart; yet there was no way for her but to remain silent, and hope and pray for a triumph in the future. She little knew how rapidly this triumph was coming.

One morning, when she was more than usually excited by something which had occurred in the parlor between Miss Dempster and herself, she went to Mr. Singleton's room. In the hall as she went she met Mr. Westerly, who had just that moment re-

turned from a drive with Lucia. "What is it?" he asked, making an attempt to detain her.

"Nothing," she answered, her red lip curling. "Let me pass, if you please. Miss Dempster says I am continually making attempts to attract your attention. Do not reverse it by attempting to attract mine."

"Miss Dempster is—a very estimable lady," said Westerly, turning on his heel.

"And you are"—began Julia, under her breath. She did not finish the sentence, even silently. It was the first unkind expression that had ever arisen in her heart concerning him. It brought the tears with it. She choked them down by a strong effort and made her way to Mr. Singleton.

"May I come in?" she asked, as he opened the door and stood for a moment regarding her questioningly.

"Come in, child? By all means," he answered. "What troubles you?"

"Nothing worth mentioning," she replied, choking up. "I am a little tired—that is all."

"Ah, it is the yearly visit to Mrs. Preston?" he said, silyly; "or to Elsa, perhaps?"

"No, no, not that," she protested, her eyes filling. "Believe me, not that."

"Then, perhaps," he went on, looking roguishly at her, "you think it is about time for our young friend, Jack Farley, to make his appearance. Is he getting chary of his visits? Isn't he quite punctual?"

Julia blushed scarlet. "I—I wasn't thinking of Jack at all," she said, working nervously at the fringe of her scarf.

"No! Then it may be that Mr. Westerly, our good James, has in some"—

"Don't!" she cried, interrupting him, while the color faded instantly from her cheeks. "It isn't anything about him. If it were—oh, don't, Mr. Singleton! It isn't anything about him! After all, it is nothing. Let me go again!"

Mr. Singleton smiled. He might be blinded in other matters, but in this he could never be. He was thoroughly awake to everything which passed between Mr. Westerly and Julia.

"Yes, I understand you," he said, still displaying a slight disposition to tease her. "It is nothing about Mr. Westerly."

"Nothing," was the low answer. "But I have been thinking"—

"What have you been thinking?" he queried, seeing that she hesitated.

"That—that (her speech appeared very treacherous), that it would be the best thing in the world for me to try and do something for myself."

"Try and do something for yourself! I do not understand you," was the reply. "What do you wish to do, pray?"

"I don't really know that myself; but it seems to me that if I were to take care of myself it would be a great deal better for me."

"How better, child?" was the serious, almost stern question. "What can you do for yourself that I cannot do for you?"

"Nothing, oh, nothing! You have done everything for me that a kind, indulgent father could do. I have never for a moment lost sight of that."

"And still you wish to leave me?"

"No, not you," she answered, adding, in a frightened way, "I don't wish to leave anybody."

"Not even Mr. Westerly?"

"I don't care one way or the other about leaving him," was the half-petulant answer.

"No, I suppose not; we'll believe so, at any rate. But let me tell you, dear child, now, as I have done many times before, that you are a great comfort and blessing to me. When you are away I am discontented and unhappy, forever longing for your return. Your presence has filled a void in my heart, which once I did not believe could be filled. You have been all that a daughter could be to me; all, I have sometimes thought, that my own little one would have been had she been spared to me."

All that a daughter could be! How could Julia keep back the hot tide of speech that surged to her lips at that moment? It seemed to her that in keeping it down her heart was breaking beneath its terrible weight. "Father! Father!" if that blessed word could but escape her lips then! But she stood silent; silent, save that her tearful eyes were full of tender words.

"Oh, I will not leave you!" she exclaimed, emphatically. "Whatever happens I will stay with you."

She took her old seat at his feet, and the

full waves of the morning sunshine poured over her. How beautiful she was at that moment! so tender and yet so proud! so like a child, and still like a strong, true-hearted woman.

"My child!" Mr. Singleton said, softly, resting his hand upon her head.

"My child!" Oh, if he could but know the truth of what he was saying! she thought.

A half-hour passed silently away, and at its expiration Mr. Singleton said, his voice growing very low and husky upon the words, "I have something to show you, Julia; something which I received yesterday. Bring me that box from that side-table yonder, if you please."

She did as she was bidden. "Now open it," he said, "and look at its contents."

She raised the cover cautiously, and gave a little exclamation of mingled pleasure and surprise at what she saw. It was a child's dress of white muslin, richly and heavily embroidered about the sleeves and neck.

"Oh, how exquisite!" said Julia. "The embroidery is like a wreath of shells. Who?"

She paused in the question she was about asking and changed color. Its answer she had already by heart; she knew well enough who had been the wearer of the pretty garment.

"The old nurse sent it to me," Mr. Singleton said, forgetting that Julia might not altogether understand him. "The old nurse that had the care of little Florence," he added, a moment after. "When the child disappeared she wore a dress precisely like this, wrought in this same strange pattern of shells. I remember it plainly—the pattern. In that very window my young wife sat when she designed it. A child could not have been more pleased over a new toy than she was over that. See how perfectly those tiny letters are hidden there, F. S. When the nurse went away, it seems, she took this little dress with her, half believing that it would in some way aid her in finding the child, over whose loss she was nearly distracted. But years have passed, and now she writes me that she must give up the hope, because she is fast wasting away with disease, and cannot last but a few days longer. So she sends this back to me at this late hour."

He bent his head upon his hands as he told the little story. Julia was silent. "If

Suke could only see this!" she thought, smoothing the while the delicate folds with her white fingers. "But where, by this time, was she? Dead, perhaps. The last time that Elsa made an attempt to find her she failed in it."

"Do you know, child," said Mr. Singleton, suddenly raising his head, "that it occurred to me, as you entered the room an hour ago, that you were very like the picture yonder?"

"I—do you think so?" was the tremulous answer.

"Yes; and I must have been thinking it for a long time, too. How very strange! Perhaps the scarf that you wear heightens the resemblance."

"Perhaps so," faltered Julia, unconsciously clasping it more closely about her throat as she spoke.

He regarded her attentively for a moment, then turned his eyes from her face. She choked down a sigh. The time when he would know her seemed very far off, just then. Would it, indeed, ever come? For a little while she almost dared tell him her whole heart, but the old whisper came in her ear, "Not yet; not yet." So she kept her silence and went out of the room, fearing that the temptation to speak would be too strong for her.

With some light needle-work Julia went down to the parlor again, where she found Mrs. Singleton, Miss Dempster, Mr. Westerly and Lucia discussing the plan of a summer party.

"You are just in time!" exclaimed Lucia, as she entered the door. "We are making out a list of the names of our friends whom we propose to invite here this summer. What additions shall we make in your behalf?"

"I will hear those already down first, if you please," was the quiet answer.

"Dear, dear! not that!" laughed Lucia—who, by the way, was in rare spirits, as she always was when Mr. Westerly was anywhere about. "Supposing, if you are too diffident, that I make a venture for you?"

"And at your own risk," suggested Julia, beginning to stitch away vigorously.

"Do see the child sew!" laughed Miss Dempster. "One would think by the way she works that she was engaged upon a garment from the tailor's, instead of a light muslin ruffle."

Westerly bit his lip nervously, seeing the

color rise to Julia's cheeks. "Your list," he said to Lucia.

"Oh, yes, my list. Well, it is for Julia that I must add the first name. Let me see," she said, laughingly; "first, Jack Farley; or, more properly, John Farley. Does that please you, Julia?"

"Nothing could please me better," was the answer.

"Very good; next, Frank Jennings."

Julia's face was red a minute before; now it suddenly paled—she could never hear that name without whitening. Mr. Westerly understood the reason why. She glanced at him once with her full, keen eyes, then looked down upon her sewing.

"Does *that* please you?" persisted Lucia.

"For your choice; not mine," was the reply.

"It shall stand amended, then. *My choice for you!*"

To this there was no answer, and Lucia went on. "Miss Elsa Weston," adding in an arch tone, "Mr. Westerly has no objection to this last addition, I dare say."

"None in the least," was the careless answer. "I am quite satisfied."

"With Julia's selections and all?"

"And all," he echoed, watching Julia's needle fly. "But wait a moment; you have not mentioned Mr. and Mrs. Preston."

"No, I have not," was the hesitating answer. "Would they be likely to come? Would they, Julia? You know more about them than I do."

"I am not positive," answered Julia, rising that moment on seeing her music-master coming up the walk.

"How very faithful she is to her lessons," remarked Miss Dempster, after she had left the room.

"One of Aunt Harriet's sly reproaches," said Lucia, in a low tone, to Mr. Westerly. "She praises Julia to depreciate me."

The gentleman made no reply to this, but rising, sauntered indolently out upon the verandah. An hour later, when he saw the music-teacher going away, he sought Julia in the music-room. She was pacing back and forth, with her arms folded before her, looking the very picture of outraged pride.

"What!" he said, going directly in her way, and fixing his eyes upon her burning face. "Has the lesson been a difficult one?"

"Very difficult," was the significant reply.

"But you have conquered it, I hope?" he said, a little nettled by her manner.

"I most certainly have. It can never trouble me again."

"Bravo! that's like your determination, Julia. But, lessons aside, I have something to say to you. Lucia's rudeness, unmeant as I believe it was, needs an apology."

"And you have come to make it for her," was the quick answer. "Believe me, it is altogether unnecessary."

"But do not be unreasonable," he said, half pettishly, half sternly,

"I am not; but apologies, smooth and well-drawn as they may be, cannot heal old wounds. Were I in your place—and I think I fully understand your position—I would not make the attempt."

"You are singularly provoking," he said, knitting his brows. "I—listen to me, Julia!"

But she would not listen; she was in no mood to listen to him, of all others. She had never thought, under any circumstances, that they would quarrel; but now she was quite ready for it.

"It is of no use, this talking, Mr. Westerly," she said, interrupting him, wholly unmindful of his imperative command. "I do not sin in using the words, 'He that is not for me is against me.' I think I fully understand myself, although I must acknowledge that my opportunities for gaining self-knowledge have been somewhat restricted." With this she swept by him out of the room.

"Unreasonable!" muttered Westerly, between his teeth, throwing himself into a chair. "I believe I hate women. Just because I—oh, I'm out of all patience! I can't say anything!"

CHAPTER XXI.

FOR the next three weeks there was a great bustle and commotion in the home of the Singletons. Nothing was thought of or talked of by Mrs. Singleton and Lucia but the coming party. New carpets and window-hangings were brought out from the city for the parlors; a new dinner and tea-service found their way into the china-closet; while the chambers underwent an entire renovation. Mr. Singleton's room, alone, seemed to escape the household tornado, remaining the same through it

all. To his wife's plans he made no objection; the spending of his money was a matter of little moment to him, so long as he was not called upon to supervise the new arrangements brought about by it.

Mr. Westerly could see to everything, he said, at the outset. He was interested in the party. As for himself, he should have enough to do when he was called upon to appear as host to the large company of visitors invited.

Caring but little for what she saw, Julia went about, as she had for months, attending to her own affairs, and taking care to avoid meddling with those of other people. True, she had a new trial upon her now, but she met it most bravely. Between herself and Mr. Westerly there was an estrangement which seemed to broaden every day. At first, believing that she herself was at fault, she resolved to break down the unnatural barrier between them; but something occurred immediately to change her determination.

She was sitting in the parlor one evening when the conversation turned, very naturally, upon the coming party. Jack had been out from the city that day for an hour's visit, and had received a formal invitation to become one of Mr. Singleton's guests. He could not positively decline or accept the invitation then, and so it passed for the time. But Lucia, always on the alert for anything which could annoy Julia, brought up the subject by asking if, indeed, they would be honored by Mr. Farley's presence?

"I hardly think you will," answered Julia, briefly.

"Then what an object of commiseration you will be!" was the rejoinder, given in a mock-serious tone.

Julia smiled, but her face reddened. The poison was working.

"Do not allow your pity for me, in your great generosity, to mar your happiness," she replied.

"Not I," returned Lucia; "especially since I believe your misery will be of your own making."

Julia glanced up. She did not quite comprehend the drift of this remark, but she did not take the trouble to say so in words. Mr. Westerly, in his cool, quiet way, expressed it for her.

"She does not understand you, Miss Lucia."

"Well, then, to simplify it," was the

light, laughing retort, "I believe if Mr. Farley absents himself, it will be at Julia's suggestion."

"Another explanation, if you please," continued Mr. Westerly. "Why should she suggest anything of that kind?"

"Dear me, how dull! Don't you see, Mr. Westerly? isn't the house to be full of handsome women? and mightn't one of the wealthiest and prettiest capture him, eh? or mightn't he capture one of the wealthiest and prettiest? With such a danger within the limits of possibility, wouldn't Julia use every effort in her power to turn her friend from it?"

Capture one of the wealthiest and prettiest! What a miserable sarcasm on the poor, hard-working boy! It gave Julia the heart-ache. For herself she did not care; but poor Jack, who was laboring so hard to make himself a name in the world! She had known from the very first that it would be no place for him. She had not yet told him to refuse to make one of the party, but she would do so now, she thought. Looking up she caught Mr. Westerly's eye. Her lip curled, and, without being conscious of the fact, she gave her head a slight toss.

Observing her, Mr. Westerly said, "It is not generous, Lucia, for one young lady to tease another openly about her lover."

"Her lover! What a miserable play upon words! and from Mr. Westerly, too!" thought Julia. "In his heart he knows that Jack is no lover of mine!"

"I am grateful to Mr. Westerly for assuring me of the relations existing between Mr. Farley and myself. I had never dreamed of them before," she said, in a low, clear voice.

Mr. Westerly bowed and smiled. After that could she ever have him for her friend again? Julia wondered. Was she to learn to despise him, too? She shuddered, thinking of the possibility of such a thing. He had been so true a friend to her, and for so long a time! A brother could not have been tenderer or kinder. A brother! What was there in that word that brought the tears to her eyes so suddenly? A brother; yes, an older brother! Had she been regarding him as such? The self-put question rushed through her heart like a flame! Merciful heavens! what had she been doing? She who was, in fact, regarded as little better than a street beggar! Had she been loving—did she love the proud man before her—she, the simple-souled fool?

She wanted to tear her heart out at that moment; she felt like dying of humiliation and shame. Rising, she went silently from the room.

"Young girls are so sensitive about their lovers!" remarked Miss Dempster, as she turned away. "Although I am sure, so far as Julia is concerned, I see but little grounds for the display of any false pride or modesty."

"Bah!" said James Westerly, under his breath; and Mrs. Singleton, looking up from her paper, condescended to say that she thought the match was a very equal one.

"I am glad you approve of it," said Miss Dempster.

"Whether you do or not, it will make but little difference," thought Westerly; but he did not say so in words. He had spoken enough. It was time for him to be silent now.

After this incident Julia studiously avoided Mr. Westerly. If she entered the library and found him there she turned directly away; if she met him in her walks she passed him with a slight bow, unaccompanied by a smile or a word. Observing this strange state of things Miss Dempster chuckled to herself, and whispered words of encouragement in Lucia's ears. Mrs. Singleton simply said, "I told you that it would be so," and allowed the matter to pass. She enjoyed the triumph silently.

Mr. Singleton, noticing a change in the heretofore happy relations existing between Mr. Westerly and Julia, forbore asking questions. As the young girl shrank further and further from those about her, she went more closely to him. In this he was made selfishly contented. Once he asked her if she were happy. She was sitting at his feet, looking at her mother's portrait.

"Yes, I am now," she answered, drooping her head.

"But are you happy here?" he persisted, looking searchingly into her face.

"As happy as I could be in any place," was the reply.

With this assurance Mr. Singleton was not satisfied, although at the time he feigned to be. He changed the subject, noticing her distressed look, by asking what she most wished that was costly and beautiful in the way of dress.

"I do not know," she said, "I do not think I want anything. I am sure that I have everything, now, that I need."

"All that you need? Yes, that may be," Mr. Singleton replied; "but young ladies aren't often contented with having their simple needs, and I don't care to have you."

"But I do not really care for anything," she persisted. "Yet whatever you wish me to have will, I am sure, please me."

"That is not quite the thing," he answered, smiling as he looked upon her grave face. "How will it do for you to go into the city on a shopping expedition with Mr. Westerly? His taste is exquisite?"

"Yes, I know it is," she said, a little curtly, "but it does not assimilate perfectly with mine; we can never in the world agree."

"But I hope better things," he said, laughing. "For my part I think your taste is very fine. Where can the trouble be, then?"

Julia shook her head. "The finest oil and the finest water will not mix a whit better than the poorest; so there is little use in arguing it."

While they were bandying words in this light way Mr. Westerly made his appearance. By some adroit way of managing, Mr. Singleton made out to slip from the room, leaving him alone with Julia. To both parties this was exceedingly embarrassing. Julia turned her head resolutely towards the window. Taking up a newspaper, under the pretence of reading, Mr. Westerly watched her from over the top of it.

"Proud, foolish thing!" he said to himself. "How much trouble she is making for us both!"

He longed to go to her that moment and ask that all past grievances might be forever buried and forgotten. There were other words, too, that arose in his heart to speak; but he was too old a man to offer the best treasures of his life, the best love of his manhood, where he more than half believed it would be met lightly, if not scornfully. Julia was a very child, at the same time that she was a strong, deep-souled woman. Strange to say, Mr. Westerly had worked himself into the belief that she cared for Jack instead of him. Men, in matters of love, are poor reasoners, and he was not an exception to the very correct rule.

Feeling his strong, magnetic gaze upon her, Julia most obstinately determined not to raise her eyes. She beat her foot upon

the carpet, hummed an old song, and, at last, growing very reckless of the gentleman's presence as well as his good opinion, puckered up her red lips and whistled—alas, that I must record so unladylike an act!—Yankee Doodle. She had learned that trick of whistling when she was a street-singer; she had communicated the fact to Mr. Westerly herself, and upon his earnest solicitation promised to drop entirely the rough, uncouth accomplishment. Here was a case of clear rebellion. Westerly bit his lip; she was doing this to annoy him, he very well knew.

"Couldn't you dance a little now?" he asked.

"Yes," she answered, promptly, without turning her eyes towards him.

"That peculiar figure that you once practiced upon the church steps?"

"Yes; and that I was so anxious to have you learn. It times itself to these words:—

" 'Mistress Nance
She came from France,
To learn to step
The polka dance—the polka dance! ' "

"The same!" said Westerly, getting more and more indignant every moment. "You might amuse Mrs. Singleton's guests by reproducing this novel figure before them."

Julia's face was like a flame, she was so very angry; yet she spoke coolly and quietly. "Or," she said, "I might teach it to you, and in turn you could teach it to Lucia; then together you might find yourselves amusement in amusing Mrs. Singleton's company. Having retired, myself, from public dancing (retired with such honor, too!) I do not care to venture out again."

"I hardly think Lucia is a person that would, now—if indeed, ever!—be greatly pleased with such a performance," Mr. Westerly answered.

"Ah, you surprise me! It is you, then, that I must teach. Let me assure you, at the outset, that the task is by no means an easy one."

"Julia," he said, impatiently. "Do you know what you are saying?"

"I am not Julia," she answered, her lip curling. "I am Jig, now; plain, impudent Jig Potter, ready, again, to defend myself to the best of my ability against whatever may be brought to bear against me. I have been a lady for some time. It is not so easy as dancing. There are harder things to bear about than tambourines, I find, even here;

and rougher music than that ground from a hand-organ."

"Very true," said Mr. Westerly. "I am glad that you have learned the fact."

"And glad that you have done your part towards teaching it to me?" she replied, her voice getting a little unsteady.

He opened his mouth to answer, but some one from the hall below just then called his name.

"You are wanted by Lucia," said Julia, waving him away with her hand. "Do not let me detain you from her."

"Thank you for your thoughtfulness," he said; "Lucia has strong claims upon both my time and attention"—

"I was well aware of the fact," she answered, interrupting him before he had time to conclude his sentence with—"to-day." He did not attempt to correct the mistake, but bowing, left the room.

For a few moments after he left her, she walked rapidly back and forth—back and forth across the room; avoiding, all the time, as she went, looking at the pictured face before her. In her rage (for she had worked herself into a great passion) she was dangerously beautiful. The reddest carnation could not have outvied the color of her cheeks and lips; or the fiercest stars rivaled the brightness of her eyes. She walked with her white hands clasped tightly before her; her slender neck arched; while every attitude of her figure was graceful and perfect.

Fearing that Mr. Singleton would return and find her in this passion, she left his room, and went out into the shady way—the fatal way it had been! near which fifteen years before she had been stolen away. In any other mood she would not have ventured there. But now she was under the supreme control of her jealous anger, and could be guided by nothing else.

"Oh, if I had but died before I went!" she said. "And then, if I had but died before I came back again! Death, anything but this torturing, unhappy life!"

She paused after having given utterance to these words. She thought she caught the sound of footsteps near by. "Traitors, everywhere!" she thought. "I haven't but one free place in the world, and that is at my father's feet."

Again she listened for a nearing footstep. A servant was coming down the path. Was it he whom she had heard? She hardly thought it possible, although she

could not tell why. In his hand he carried a dainty bouquet of purple pansies.

"With Mr. Westerly's compliments," he said, giving it to her, and turning away as he did so.

How beautiful it was! and of all flowers upon the earth, there was none other that she loved so well as the pansy! She could not keep the tears back from her eyes, and yet she was so proud, so very proud! Once she pressed her lips passionately to the delicately scented flowers, and then threw them half-angrily upon the ground and walked away. As she did so, her pride seemed to break, and over her hot face the tears fell in showers.

But the blossoms that she left! let us look after them. As she disappeared in the distance, Miss Dempster stepped cautiously from behind a clump of locust trees—her sharp eyes all ablaze with mischievous malice. She stooped down and picked up the neglected bouquet, and then, after looking keenly about, in every direction, sat down in a garden-chair, near by, and commenced tearing the flowers in pieces, one by one. The poor, delicate, tender little flowers! After they lay, a sweet-scented wreck in her lap, she gathered them up in her hand, and drawing a piece of tissue paper from the reticule upon her arm, wrapped them carefully in it.

This done, she turned down the little by-path which Mr. Westerly's messenger had taken. Would she overtake him, and was it for that which she was trying?

But Julia, in the meantime, could not forget her flowers. Beautiful, darling peace-offerings! Through her tears she wondered how in her anger, even, she could have neglected them. A half-hour elapsed, and then—her better reason and tender nature triumphant—she put on her broad-brimmed gardening hat, to conceal her red and swollen eyes, and went down the shaded way to the spot where she had left her flowers. But—and her eyes grew large with wonder—they were not there!

"Has Mr. Westerly found them?" she wondered, while a blush of shame crept over her cheeks. "Oh, how could I have been so unwomanly! so untrue!"

She turned away again, her heart as heavy as lead. A few steps beyond, she met Mr. Westerly, himself. Fearing that he would notice she had been weeping, and feeling so very, very much ashamed, she sprang past

him. He caught her by the arm, almost fiercely, and held her there a moment, looking down into the depths of her startled eyes as if he would draw up her very soul, by the strength of his passionate glances. She did not try to wrest her arm from his vise-like grasp, but stood quietly and silently before him.

"You have done well!" he said, hoarsely; holding, as he spoke, the paper of crumpled blossoms before her eyes.

What did he mean? what were they to her? what had she done? The crushed flowers were not hers, were the thoughts that dashed rapidly through her brain. She made an attempt to speak, but could not.

"The next time that you insult me, let it be between ourselves. Do not proclaim it to a third party."

"I insult you?" gasped Julia, looking down at the poor blossoms, which, at that moment, he tossed upon the ground.

"Yes, me! There is nothing so very strange to you in that, I am sure!"

Still she looked wonderingly at the flowers, repeating to herself, "I insult him?"

"Let this end it; from this day you and I must be strangers," he said.

Strangers! Why should he say that to her? "Are those the pansies that—that?"

"The same that you tore in pieces and returned by a servant to me!" he answered, vehemently.

She stood, for a moment, as if stunned by his words, the misty truth creeping slowly through her brain. He turned away, stamping his foot, as he did so, upon the flowers.

"I never—never"—cried Julia, springing after him. "Listen to me!"

"No more, if you please," he answered, in a low tone. "Let it pass. Not another word," he added, impatiently. "See! there is Mrs. Singleton and Miss Dempster. For your pride's sake, do not allow them to hear you."

He walked rapidly away, leaving her standing there, her face white with anguish. "God knows what will come upon me next!" she murmured, clasping her hands, for a moment, across her forehead.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE next week the home of Mr. Singleton was filled to overflowing, with visitors. Conspicuous among the number, were Frank

Jennings and his cousin, an old friend, Elsa Weston. The anticipations of the past weeks were now merged into reality; strange, indeed, if the latter had proved as sweet as the former!

"Oh, I think it so fine, dear!" said Elsa, putting her arms about Julia the second morning after her arrival. "I am so heartily glad that the party is to last a long time. Aren't you?"

"Yes," Julia answered, mechanically.

"Yes! only a yes! you sober darling! What has changed you so? You are not a bit as you were last summer at Mrs. Preston's; you look so solemn, now, and say so little!"

Julia smiled. "Am I changed so very much, then?"

"So very much? yes," answered Elsa, looking seriously into her face. "I am sorry, too."

"And I am sorry, if you are," was the grave answer. "But," she added, her face lighting up, "you do not change in the least. You are just the same now, that you used to be. I think old Suke named you right—the lily!"

"I used to like to hear that from her; poor old Suke," said Elsa, musingly. "I wonder where she is now. I could not find her the last time that I tried. Her room was shut closely. Some said that she had gone; some that she kept herself locked up all the time, because she did not like to see people. At any rate, I did not find her."

"I have thought that I should, sometime, make the attempt, myself," Julia said, her cheeks flushing slightly.

"Oh, you should never do that—never! You ought not to trust yourself in that place!"

Julia interrupted her with a laugh. "Look at me, you innocent lily. Do I look as though I could be easily captured? do you suppose they could make me carry the tambourine, again? or sing—listen, Elsa—the old song:—

"Oh, you'd better stay at home with the gal you love so dear,
Than to endanger your sweet life on the bold privateer."

"How strangely natural!" said Elsa, as the clear tones died away. "But somehow it makes me very sad. It brings everything back very plainly, oh, so very plainly."

"Yes, I know, dear—the little sun-burned crow, in her rags and dirt, crawling up your stairway for a smile or two from you; the

little ambitious crow, whose great thought was of sometime becoming a lady, A lady! poor, ignorant thing! What a gift she thought it would be that would bring that title to her!"

"It has brought you friends, dear, at any rate," answered Elsa, understanding full well her sarcasm.

"True; but you have always been my friend, and so has Jack; dear, good, true-hearted Jack. Every day of my life I bless him for what he is and has been to me. Dear Jack!"

"Yes," Elsa said, looking down.

"He will do something in the world, depend upon it. He is doing something, now!"

"Yes," Elsa said, again, still looking at the carpet.

"That's a splendid figure, isn't it?" asked Julia, slyly, following the direction that her eyes had taken.

"Yes," she answered, giving a quick look into Julia's face. But she saw nothing there, save an imperturbable gravity which showed no signs of changing.

"Jack is coming out, to-night," Julia went on, quietly. "He expects to gain some important situation, and is anxious to tell me about it."

"Yes; I'm glad," said Elsa.

"We'll have a walk all by ourselves, if you please; it will be so very pleasant."

Again Elsa said "yes," much to the amusement of Julia, who was trying her best to restrain her laughter.

"What a pretty secret I am getting," thought Julia, taking the beautiful lily-like face between her hands, and compelling her to meet her strong, inquiring glances. "What a pretty secret welling up in the clear blue eyes! tossing about in the light, floating curls, and trying to hide itself among the dimples of your sweet, winsome mouth!"

"What is it?" asked Elsa.

"Nothing, dear; only I do think that you are like a lily; alas, that I must always be the crow; or, to change it, as Mr. Westerly did once, in one of his amiable moods, calling me a dahlia! A dahlia, ugh!"

"You are not that, I am sure," answered Elsa, laughing. "I think you are more like a queen-rose, one that is of a rich crimson."

"Another change; thank you, dear. But I think I am like a poppy. I told Mr. Westerly so."

"Did you? But what is he like?"

"That is what I cannot tell; you'll have to ask Miss Lucia Dempster, I guess."

"Is he her's?" inquired Elsa, innocently.

"I suppose he is," was the quick answer.

"I hope so, at any rate. Mrs. Singleton said yesterday morning that Lucia was going to Europe in the fall. Mr. Westerly has planned doing so, for a long time."

"What a handsome couple they will make," remarked Elsa. "I should think it would be a good match."

"Oh, it will," answered Julia, adding, under her breath, as she turned away, "such an appropriate match!"

However pleasant the party was to Elsa Weston, it was quite the reverse to Julia. Of the guests, a large number were Mrs. Singleton's and Miss Dempster's own personal friends. To them, of course, the history of the sensitive, proud girl was freely told; and they, in turn, taking their cue from these reliables, found opportunities without number, to slight Julia. She was too proud to complain of this. She would have died first. She went her way as independently as though every day was not one of torture to her. Mr. Westerly did not fail to know and understand how matters stood; but in his own aggravated state of mind he had little disposition to meddle with them. So the days floated by—to all appearances quietly—but under the smooth surface and flow of every-day life, there was a turbulent current, forever threatening to break out in rebellion.

In the meantime, Jack came often from the city to see Julia; sometimes Elsa was present at their interviews—sometimes, but not always. "They are lovers!" she used to say, when she saw them stroll off arm-in-arm together; and then, with her delicate cheeks flushed, she would try to wish them, while she painted out their future, the best and truest happiness. She did not blame Jack for loving Julia, she was just the one for him; so smart, enterprising and persevering, she would think. And she did not blame Julia for loving him, not she! How could she well help it?

So she reasoned along quietly, to herself, getting more and more blinded every day; and sometimes growing very sad at heart, and wishing a great many foolish and disagreeable things, which was not at all like her, when she was in a healthy state of mind. But could she, indeed, have known all that passed between Jack and Julia, how her

timid little heart would have trembled with joy. Ah, Elsa! Elsa! true forever to the boy-hero of her early girlhood!

But one night, while Jack and Julia were conversing together in the garden, they had a listener that they knew little of. That listener was Mr. James Westerly, although he did not, willingly, place himself in such a position as to warrant him the name. He was sitting at that time alone, in the further end of a vine-shaded arbor, when the young couple entered and seated themselves close by the entrance.

At first they conversed in whispers, which, he tried his best to believe meant no more than plain, outspoken words. He feigned the utmost indifference towards Julia and her opinions, but when, in the course of the conversation, she mentioned his name, he listened, as eagerly and intently as if his very life depended upon her words.

"And you cannot solve this mystery?" he heard Jack inquire.

"Oh, no! I have concluded to let it go; to believe that I am in a nest of viperous enemies, and so content myself as well as I can."

"And your friendship with Mr. Westerly will die out so!" said Jack, in reality, sadly; but as the listener thought, triumphantly.

"Die, my dear Jack! You cannot half imagine how very dead it is! There is no resurrection for it. Every insult and slight that I receive, buries it still deeper."

"But, Julia, there may be some explanation for this, as indeed there is a great mystery."

"Perhaps so; but it is not my business to seek it out. He would not let me speak a single word in my own defence. He would not have believed me if I had; so I suppose it is just as well; but this, I am sure of, that he must come to me, for I—to save my life a thousand times over—would not go to him! But our estrangement is very pleasant to Miss Dempster and Lucia. I heard the latter say yesterday, to her aunt, that I had followed Mr. Westerly so closely that I had sickened him; I suppose this is the current belief among the guests."

"Poor Jig!" said Jack, soothingly. "It is too cruel—too cruel! But sometime you shall be free of it all. I am sure of this."

"Oh, bless you, dear Jack, for your encouragement! I shall be free of it, I know. I feel it in my heart, this very moment."

"I shall be able to help you"—

"Hush, Jack!" she said, putting her hand over his mouth, "I thought I heard some one."

"It's my heart beating," thought Westerly. "I'm certain it sounds as loudly as a drum."

"You are mistaken, Julia; you are nervous. But one word more—have patience—and I will go home."

"Let us be walking towards the house," she suggested, rising. "Say the one word as we go along; I can half divine its import this minute," she added, gayly.

"Don't tease me if you do," were the last words that fell on Mr. Westerly's ears.

"But, let me assure the reader that Jack Farley's 'word' was multiplied into words, before he left. Hearing him in the distance, Mr. Westerly felt very like shaking him. He stalked out of the summer-house after the young couple, and came upon them just in time to hear Jack say, as he gave Julia a blossom from a neighboring shrub:—

"For my sake, Julia—remember that!"

"Never fear, I will not," was the answer which sent Mr. Westerly's blood leaping through his "indifferent" heart, as he passed along.

"It was Mr. Westerly," faltered Julia. "I hope"—

"What?" interrupted Jack. "That he will not mistake the meaning of what he heard and saw? Yet, if he does, what then?" he added, inquiringly, his brown eyes filling with roguish light.

"Don't, Jack! don't tease me!" Julia replied, beseechingly. "I can't bear it from you."

When Julia went to her room she found Elsa dressed to go down to the parlors.

"We are to have 'a little dance to-night,' you remember?" Elsa said, smiling.

"Yes, and here is an ornament for you to wear; a single blossom that a certain friend of ours wishes you would wear for his sake! See how beautiful it is!"

"Was it from Mr.—Mr."—

"From the very Mr. that you wish, dear," interrupted Julia.

Without another word Elsa fastened the blossom upon her bosom with her little trembling hands. Her blue eyes were full of tears.

"Are you very glad?" asked Julia, putting her arm about her waist and drawing her towards her.

"Very glad!" was the simple, innocent

answer, as she leaned her head against Julia's bosom.

"Dear Jack, dear Elsa! but poor Jig!" said Julia, softly. "No, don't speak, dear! Your eyes are full of what you would say. It is quite late, and I must dress for the evening. I am going to be as gay as a bird to-night."

"That means that you will sit at the piano and play waltzes and quadrilles during the whole evening," said Elsa.

"No, it does not. Wait and see. I am as light as a feather."

"Gay to-night, indeed!" thought Elsa, as the evening went by. She had never seen Julia so like her old self; bright, dashing and piquant she moved about, winning admiration at every turn. Mr. Singleton watched her with silent pride; and Mr. Westerly, his mind in a strange whirl of doubt, discouragement and jealousy, almost wished that she would go back to her chamber, where her starlike face might not be seen by everyone.

In the course of the evening there was a call for music, and, without hesitation, Julia allowed Frank Jennings (how Mr. Westerly's cheek burned as he watched her!) to lead her to the piano. She had never consented to sing before the company before. What had taken possession of her now?

Like magic her white fingers flew over the piano, and her voice, strong, clear and rich, rang out through the measures of the music, as though a great, wild heart were pulsing through it. Up, up it went, to the exquisite heights of the melody, and then down, down, as if it longed to die away in that low valley of song.

A burst of applause that would not have been considered light in a concert-room followed the completion of the song. Miss Dempster's eyes glittered like fire.

"Let us listen to you now," said Mr. Westerly to Lucia.

"I could not think of it after Julia's success," was the answer. "I cannot compete with her at all; you know," she added, speaking quite loud, "that she made singing a profession before I had ever struck a note."

Mr. Westerly bit his lip. Looking up and catching a glimpse of Julia's face he saw that the unlucky speech had not been lost. The color upon her cheek grew richer, and she drew herself up haughtily, as if, for the moment, she felt strong and brave enough

to battle the whole world to gain a fair footing in it. He did not think she would speak then. Her words fell upon his ear like a thunder-clap.

"Yes," she said, in answer to Lucia, her voice sounding clear and even, "I was a street-singer by profession before Lucia had ever tried to run the scale."

"What are you saying?" whispered Frank Jennings in her ear. "You are so fiercely handsome that I am in love with you."

There was an unwarranted freedom in the speech which grated harshly upon Julia's nerves.

"You!" she answered, snatching her hand from his arm. "If you should love me for a moment, I should loathe myself during my whole lifetime."

He looked into her eyes. He had seen that same expression in them, years before, when he insulted her in the street. "If you had a tambourine you would serve me a blow over my head," he said, in a low tone.

"Most certainly I would," was the prompt answer, as he turned away to Lucia.

"Miss Julia is in an amiable mood this evening," he said, laughing.

"Slightly tragic," remarked Miss Dempster, shrugging her shoulders.

A flow of small talk followed, every word of which reached the ear of Julia. But she bore up bravely in spite of it; the only signs of her displeasure were upon her crimson cheek and in her steadily burning eyes. In the midst of this Mr. Westerly, touched beyond expression by what he had heard, went to her and asked her to waltz with him. This was harder than anything else could have been. He spoke so kindly and compassionately, as though he understood it all, that the tears sprang to her eyes.

"Don't—not now," she said, hurriedly, turning her head from him.

He drew her hand within his arm without speaking. "Yes, now," he said.

In a moment more they were whirling about the rooms. Julia danced as well as she sang; everyone present knew it as they watched her. Round and round they went, smoothly and evenly, as though the music were in waves beneath their feet, and they were gliding over them in measures.

"By Jove! what a dancer!" exclaimed Frank Jennings to Lucia. "It reminds me of"—

"What?" queried Lucia.

"Of something upon which I must be silent," was the answer. "Do not question me, please."

"But I know myself what it is," said Lucia. "I will prove I do in a few moments."

And she did prove it. As Julia came within hearing, leaning upon Mr. Westerly's arm, she said:—

"We common young ladies cannot expect to outvie people in their own professions, either in singing or dancing. Miss Julia has one as perfectly as the other."

"Bravo!" whispered Frank Jennings. "You have told it; now look at the dancer for a moment."

"You are saying too much," said Miss Dempster, in a low, indistinct tone. Lucia reddened; not so much at what her aunt said, as the way that, for a moment, Mr. Westerly rested his eyes upon her face.

"Let me go, please," pleaded Julia of Mr. Westerly. "Let me get out into the free air; I shall die here."

"If you go I shall go," he answered, firmly.

"But let me go alone," she whispered.

"No, we will go together," he replied, starting forward as he spoke.

When they were upon the verandah Julia would have escaped him if she could, but he held her hand tightly upon his arm.

"I will send a servant for a shawl; then we will walk together," he said.

She could not answer him; her voice was choked with tears. So, without speaking, she allowed him to wrap her shawl about her, and then lead her down the verandah steps out into the quiet moonlight.

"If you would only let me go alone!" she said through her tears a few moments after.

"Not for a moment," was the determined answer. "God knows, child, how my heart is aching for you."

His heart aching for her! How fast the tears welled up in her eyes as he said this.

"I am neither marble or granite," he went on, "although—Heaven forgive me for it—I may have seemed as hard as either."

She could not answer him. It seemed to her that her heart was breaking with its fullness. If she could only speak—only tell him what she had longed to do for so many days; that she had not insulted him as he had thought.

"Do you know, dear child," he still con-

tinued, "that in my heart I have no hardness against you."

"Then you know—you do not believe that I spurned your beautiful peace-offering?" she asked.

"No; not now. I was miserably blinded, and by my own selfishness, too, I believe. I took everything as it seemed to me, and all the while I knew you better."

"But I am, in reality, everything that is wicked and cruel," she cried out. "I could almost do murder to-night, I have been so insulted, so degraded by their malicious speeches. Oh, if I could but escape them! If I could but be free!"

"You can and you shall!" answered Mr. Westerly, earnestly, holding both her hands closely in his. "It is in your power to bring them all fawning about your feet, and in my power to silence them eternally."

She did not ask him how; she knew without his telling. Her heart seemed to stand still with happiness. Still she could not bear that he should speak then; there would be a better time soon, she thought.

"Be a child again in your faith and trust in me," he said. "It has been a hard world for you. My love is strong enough to make it easy, if you will."

"No—not now—don't say that, now," she said, earnestly. "Wait! Sometime I will hear it."

"Sometime! no, it is now that I love you with all the strength of my manhood; it is now that you need my care and protection. Only tell me this, that you do not care for Jack, and that—you love me!"

"I do not care for Jack, only as I would for a brother; but the other I cannot answer now. Don't beg me to tell it, dear Mr. Westerly; don't ask it. I am so glad and so happy, now!"

"But," he began, hesitatingly, "you would leave me to feed upon air."

"No, I would not," she answered. "But I cannot—I cannot yet. Oh, if I only knew!"

"Knew what?" he asked, drawing his breath quickly; "if you could love me?"

"I know already," she answered, fervently, making a confession that she had been trying to avoid.

"God bless you for that, my darling!" he said, drawing her to him.

For a moment she rested her head upon his shoulder, and felt his strong, protecting arms about her; the next she sprang away.

"You must let me go now," she said, pleadingly. "Do not ask me to promise anything. Let me go, and wait—wait."

"Wait!" he repeated the word after her. "It is now that you need me."

"Yes, I know it; but still, put faith in me for this once—for this once," she repeated, reaching out her hand to him.

"I can do no better, you willful darling," he said, bending down and kissing her.

"Bless you!" she answered; "now I am going; good-night."

She sprang away from him and went like the wind before him to the house. But she did not go to her chamber to rest; instead, she stole softly into Mr. Singleton's room, and with her eyes fixed upon her mother's face, waited for him to make his appearance. She did not have to wait a great while for him; if she had she would hardly have thought of it, she had so much to think of.

"What is it?" asked Mr. Singleton, looking pleased to see her brightened face.

"I can't answer at once," she said, coloring; "but I have something strange to ask of you."

"Something strange? What can it be, pray?"

"It is a favor," she answered, lowering her eyes.

"And one of some importance, or you would not be waiting here for me at this late hour."

"Yes, it is of great importance," she answered, gravely. "But tell me first, can you trust me?"

"Trust you? What do you mean, child?"

[To be continued.]

"Why, I mean can you trust me as people trust in each other, generally?"

"Trust you, Julia? what a very absurd question," he replied, resting his hand upon her head. "Who in the world do I trust more?"

"And can you trust me with money? and without knowing what I want of it, too?"

He looked into her face searchingly.

"Yes, I think I could."

"Well, then," she said, "it is money that I want; soon, very soon, you shall know what for. I want a great deal of money!"

"How much do you call a great deal?"

"Oh, a hundred dollars—maybe one hundred and fifty. Can you trust me with as much as that?"

"Yes, yes; but you are a strange, unreadable spirit; wouldn't it be better for you to tell me all about it at first?"

"No, not yet; you shall hear soon."

"Do you want it to-night?"

"Yes."

He went to his desk, and taking a roll of bills therefrom, placed twice the amount she had asked for in her hand. "See how much I trust you?" he said, laughing.

She stepped back into the shadows as he spoke, and clasped the crimson mantle that she wore closely about her throat. Mr. Singleton glanced from her face to the picture.

"O my God!" he said, turning pale. "How like the picture you are!"

She was frightened, fearing that he had caught her secret from her. Giving one glance into his white, surprised face, she sprang from the room.

THE SONG OF THE WIND.

BY E. J. WHITNEY.

FROM a land of blossoms and blooms I come, from over the emerald sea,
Where the sun-kissed waves break to snowy pearls, as they dash on the rock-strewn lea;
Where the nightingale and the bulbul sing in the golden orange bowers,
And the humming-bird like a diamond swings o'er the crimson-hearted flowers.

The breath of the blossoms enters my soul, as they sway in the purple air,
And I kiss their perfumed, rose-tinted lips, and play with their fragrant hair.
I bear their snowy leaves on my breast, and their last sad requiem sigh,
As I drop them afar on plain and steep, where the dead brown grasses lie.

I touch with my wand the silvery leaves of the willows bending low,
And they murmur a song to the listening brook, as the bright waves ebb and flow.
When the sweet-hearted summer swiftly flies to her home o'er the foam-kissed sea,
And the silver songs of the birds are hushed, in thicket, meadow and lea;

When cloudlets of scarlet, amber and rose, give place to an angry brown,
And the emerald sheen of the singing leaves change to crimson, gold and brown,
Then my song grows martial; in glorious strains I sing of the ice and snow,
And the crystal bells ring merry chimes wherever my footsteps go.

A MODERN ARCADIA.

IN the Indian Ocean, some six hundred miles from the coast of Sumatra, there is one of those curious circular lagoon-islands of which one reads in stories of the South Seas. They are called atolls, and they confine a space of clear, smooth water, while the surf breaks heavily on the outer or ocean side. In the case of the one to which we now refer, there is, on the northern side of the ring, an opening through which vessels can pass to a secure anchorage within. This ringlet of coral-land is sometimes called the Cocos, and sometimes the Keeling Island. Little known to travelers, it is still less known to ordinary readers, even to those tolerably well acquainted with books of travel. But it possesses a history and natural characteristics which render it eminently worth a little attention.

Fifty years ago Darwin visited the lagoon in the *Beagle*, and was struck with its peculiarity. "The shallow, clear and still water of the lagoon," he wrote, "resting in its greater part on white sand, is, when illumined by a vertical sun, of the most vivid green. This brilliant expanse, several miles in width, is on all sides divided either by a line of snow-white breakers from the dark heaving waters of the ocean, or from the blue vault of heaven by the strips of land, crowned by the level tops of the cocoanut trees. As a white cloud here and there affords a pleasing contrast with the azure sky, so in the lagoon bands of living coral darken the emerald green water. . . . On Direction Island the strip of dry land is only a few hundred yards in width; on the lagoon side there is a white calcareous beach; and on the outer coast a solid, broad flat of coral-rock served to break the violence of the open sea. Excepting near the lagoon, where there is some sand, the land is entirely composed of rounded fragments of coral. In such a loose, dry, stony soil the climate of the intertropical region alone could produce a vigorous vegetation. On some of the smaller islets, nothing could be more elegant than the manner in which the young and full-grown cocoanut trees, without destroying each other's symmetry, were mingled into one wood. A beach of glittering white sand formed a border to these fairy spots."

On this veritable fairy-ring, thrown up in mid-ocean, and basking alone in a wilderness of waters, Darwin applied himself to the study of coral formations, and evolved his theory of barrier-reefs. But the Keeling Islands have a deeper human interest, which we propose to evolve with the assistance of Mr. H. O. Forbes, who has done so much for the cause of natural science in his wanderings in the Eastern Archipelago.

It was in 1836 that Darwin visited the Cocos-Keeling Islands; and it was not until 1878 that Mr. Forbes found his way thither from Batavia, the capital of Java, where he was botanizing. The chance of a passage in a small sailing-craft was eagerly seized; and after fourteen days of stormy combat with the monsoon in the Straits of Sunda, and sixteen days of baffling calms on the bosom of the Indian Ocean, the islands were at length reached. In the darkness of the night the little vessel crept cautiously through the narrow entrance into the safe anchorage of the lagoon, lighted only by the phosphorescence of countless shoals of fishes which darted like rockets below the keel. The dawn revealed the extent of the island-lake, enclosed as by a palisade of palm-trees on a narrow ribbon of land, and the first feeling was one of astonishment that what appeared such a tiny speck in the huge waste of waters should be able to hold its own against the mighty assaults of the ocean.

In a very short time Mr. Forbes was carried off with delight by the monarch of the reef, and installed with honor in his hospitable abode, as the first European since Darwin who had of deliberate purpose visited the spot. And there he learned the strange history of the little community.

Among the many Scottish families wrecked in the Jacobite troubles of the '45 was one named Ross. A descendant of the family "took to the sea," and in the happier days in the first quarter of the present century, attained the command of one of the vessels stationed in the Java Sea for the protection of British interests. At the close of 1825, this Captain Ross chanced upon the Keeling Islands, and struck with the advantage of their situation for the repair and provisioning of vessels voyaging to and from

China, India, and Australia, took possession of the group. He went to England, and returned in 1837 to settle permanently, accompanied by his wife and six children, twelve Englishmen, one Javanese, and one Portuguese. But on landing he found an interloper in possession of a third part of the group. This was an Englishman, named Alexander Hare, who had once held an official post in Borneo, which he had to leave on the re-instatement of the Dutch. In Borneo Hare had assumed the state of an independent ruler, and driven from thence, sought some unoccupied spot where he could reassume the same role. He pitched on Keeling, and took thither a large harem of diverse nationality, and a great retinue of slaves, whom he browbeat and treated generally in the orthodox oriental manner. He had accumulated a considerable fortune, and Ross found him living an indolent life in mock-regal style.

From the first Hare exhibited great hostility to Captain Ross and his party, and the enterprising Scotchman found himself in considerable difficulty. He had drawn together his party on the understanding that the islands were his own, that there would be ample room for all, and that there would be no opposition in the developments of the resources. Finding a usurper in possession of one-third of the promised land, he could only offer to release his followers from their bargain. All but three—two men and a woman—accepted the release, and departed by a gunboat which happened to touch at the islands shortly after. Thus left with but three supporters besides his own family, the Scotchman's position was not enviable; but he did not lose heart. In time he induced seven or eight persons to come to him from Java; and by-and-by a few Europeans, some being his own relatives, augmented the little settlement. Then he hired coolies in Batavia, and began a steady and lucrative trade in cocoanuts with Mauritius, Madras, Bencoolen, and various parts of the archipelago.

In the meantime he was constantly annoyed and opposed by his neighbor Hare, who even tried to induce the officials at Batavia to come and forcibly annex the place to Holland. This attempt was unsuccessful, as was also that of Ross to induce the authorities at Mauritius to assume its protectorate. After this Ross made direct application to King William to allow the atoll to be proclaimed British territory; but

in this also he was unsuccessful. Finally, the vagabond Hare, tired of the idle life, vacated the place and went to Singapore, where he died immediately afterwards. Mr. Ross, thus left in undisturbed possession, soon became known in the archipelago as the King of the Cocos Islands.

It was while the settlement was in a state of transition, just after Hare had left, and while Mr. Ross was absent on business, that Darwin visited it, and formed a net very favorable opinion of its condition. But since then a wonderful change has come over it, and when Mr. Forbes paid his visit the colony was prosperous and happy; for, with the assistance of his eldest son, Mr. Ross soon brought about a perfect state of organization. He had two villages built, one for the hired coolies, and the other for the European and other true colonists. He also built and acquired quite a fleet of vessels for the carrying on of the trade. That trade was almost uniformly prosperous, and left a handsome balance over year by year.

The great trouble was with the hired coolies. These had to be brought from Java, and had to be engaged for a term of years, the only ones who could be got being criminals who had served out their time in the chain-gangs of Batavia; that is to say, the worst and most dangerous class one could have anything to do with. As they far outnumbered the colonists, their presence was a constant menace and anxiety; but they could not be done without. A regular system of guard was therefore established, and watches were kept all night with military rigor and precision, the changes being marked as on board ship by the stroke of a bell.

The great dread was of incendiarism, for a fire would have destroyed not only the combustible dwellings, but also the new palm-trees themselves, which formed the wealth of the community. The colony was isolated on Home Island, and it was ordained penal for anyone to spend the night elsewhere. Every boat was numbered, and had to be hauled into its place an hour before sunset. At nightfall the roll was called; any absentees were at once noted, and a search instantly made for them. Yet, notwithstanding these precautions, some of the crime-stained coolies would still occasionally manage to escape on to the other islets, and keep the settlement in suspense for weeks; or would run riot through the

village and endanger the lives of all. But in time the chain-gang men were all got rid of, and a change in the laws of Batavia enabled the Rosses to select their own coolies. They took care to engage only those of the best character.

The present Monarch of Keeling is the grandson of the original proprietor. He was educated at home, and was, in fact, studying engineering in Glasgow when the news of a great disaster summoned him to the assistance of his father. A terrible cyclone had broken on the group and completely wrecked the settlement. In the midst of the distress the father died, and young Ross was left alone to grapple with misfortune and revive the broken spirit of the colony. This was in 1862; and now the place bears evidence of his energy and talent for administration.

He cleared away the unprofitable forest, planted the ground with palms, imported machinery, and set up steam-mills, and established a school, under the charge of a younger brother who had been educated at a Scottish university. His wife, who was born in the islands, shared all his ideas and interests; and the two, says Mr. Forbes, "became the parents of the people, rather than their masters and rulers."

The ordinary work of all is in gathering the nuts and preparing the oil—which are sent to Batavia, and there exchanged for grain and other necessities which the islanders cannot produce for themselves. But besides his ordinary duties, every man has to learn to work in wood, iron and brass; and every girl has to undergo in Mrs. Ross's house an apprenticeship in sewing, cooking and other domestic arts of the European pattern. It will interest our lady readers to learn that Mr. Forbes declares he never met with more perfectly trained servants anywhere.

In this modern Arcadia there is no money to tempt men to robbery. The satanic glamour of gold is not allowed to sully the purity and tranquillity of the little community; and if silver exists at all, it is but in the shape of a few trifling ornaments. Instead of money, Mr. Ross has devised a currency of sheep-skin notes signed by himself. Wages and imports are alike paid for in these notes, which can only be exchanged for Dutch money on presentation to Mr. Ross's agent in Batavia. It is obviously useless to steal these notes, because any vessel by

which the thief could reach Batavia would also carry instructions to the agent to refuse payment of them.

Each family has a comfortably furnished plank-built house inclosed in a little garden; and each has one or more boats carefully housed in a shed by the water's side. These boats are their pride and delight, and the constant source of a friendly emulation in respect of speed or elegance of shape or superiority of finish. The people are as much at home on the sea as on the land, and thus the boats are almost as important to them as the houses.

The village where the hired coolies live is apart. It is well and neatly kept, the dwellings are comfortable, and the people are treated kindly and liberally. In the event of the death of a head of a family, the children are either sent back to the father's native place, or allowed to remain and become Cocos people, according as the widow may elect.

Midway between the villages—the language spoken in both of which is Malay, although English is understood by most of the Cocos people—is the house of Mr. Ross. It is large, comfortable, and surrounded by a high wall, inclosing a large garden, luxuriant with fruit-trees, flowering shrubs, and roses. Here lives the proprietor with his family; and here also are accommodated several of his brothers, associated with him in the management of the community.

The relations between "The House" and the Cocos village, we are told, are of the most cordial and affectionate character, and constant evidence of it came before the notice of Mr. Forbes while residing among them. A death of any member of the colony is felt by all as a family loss. Says Mr. Forbes: "That in their relations one with another there should be perfection, is not to be expected; but a finer and more upright community I have never known, nor a simpler or more guileless people—many of whom have never known and never seen a world wider than their own atoll, which can be surveyed in a single glance of the eye; and I feel more than half confident that the English service for the dead has been said over, and that beneath the coral shingle of Grave Islet there rest, as blameless lives as perhaps our weak humanity can attain to."

But it is not free from its share in the troubles which are the lot of humanity, and it has some peculiarly its own. We have

spoken of one terrible disaster in the time of Ross the Second. Another occurred during the reign of Ross the Third. Towards the end of January, 1876—when the population of the islands numbered some five hundred native-born—an abnormal fall in the barometer indicated some great atmospheric disturbance. On the 28th it fell to twenty-eight inches, and the boats were all hauled up into a place of safety. The same afternoon a dark bank of clouds appeared in the western sky, and before evening the cyclone burst. Every house in both villages was swept away; the storehouses and mills, just completed, were dismantled and gutted; great patches of trees were thrown down or carried away entirely; and a great wave carried a ship bodily on to the spot where Ross's house had stood. The only shelter was to be found in hollows of the ground, and there the people crouched, everything having an elevation of over a foot or two being swept away or blown down.

When the morning broke calm and clear, not a speck of green was to be seen on the whole circle of the islets, and the solid coral was broken in fragments on the beach. Thirty-six hours later, the water of the eastern side of the lagoon began to rise and to show a peculiar dark color. The inky liquid had the smell of rotten eggs, and it continued to spread for fourteen days, until it had extended almost quite around the lagoon. Many fish in the waters impregnated with this liquid died in a few hours, and so great was the quantity of poisoned fish thrown

upon the beach, that it took three weeks of hard work to bury them. Then the deathly stream gradually passed away. It is supposed to have issued from some submarine volcano, an eruption of which had caused the frightful tidal wave that submerged the settlement.

In six months, however, tree and shrub were clothed in verdure again; and before the end of three years, fruit was being yielded in as great abundance as before. Such is the recuperative force of nature in these latitudes! When Mr. Forbes visited the islands only two years after, the traces of the disaster were rapidly disappearing, and the whole settlement seemed the ideal of a peaceful and happy colony.

But we have not space to dwell on all the wonderful varieties of vegetable, animal and marine life of this remarkable lagoon-island. We have said enough to show that Mr. Forbes is right in disputing the universal applicability of Dana's statement, that "notwithstanding all the products and all attractions of a coral island, even in its best condition, it is but a miserable place for human development, physical, mental, or moral." In the Keeling atoll, on the contrary, we find a healthy, happy, contented, prosperous, and singularly moral people, living a life of continuous industry, untroubled by the turmoil of the outer world, undisturbed by political discussions, and unsullied by avarice. Here, indeed, is a prosperous practical State, an actual Modern Arcadia.

"LITTLE BOY-BLUE."

[The following farm lyric was written years ago by Abby Sage Richardson. Probably few of our readers have ever seen it.]

UNDER the haystack little Boy-Blue
Sleeps with his head on his arm;
While voices of men and voices of maids
Are calling over the farm.

Sheep in the meadows are running wild
Where poisonous herbage grows,
Leaving white tufts of downy fleece
On the thorns of the sweet wild rose,

Out in the field where the silken corn
Its plumed head nods and bows,
Where golden pumpkins ripen below,
Trample the white-faced cows.

But no loud blast on the shining horn
Calls back the straying sheep;

And the cows may wander in hay and corn,
While their keeper lies asleep.

His roguish eyes are tightly shut,
His dimples are all at rest;
The chubby hand turned under his head
By one rosy cheek is pressed.

Waken him? No! Let down the bars,
And gather the truant sheep;
Open the barnyard and drive in the cows,
But let the little boy sleep;

For year after year we can shear the fleece,
And corn can always be sown;
But the sleep that visits little Boy-Blue
Will not come when years be flown.

SLYMKIN'S REVENGE.

BY N. P. DARLING.

"**S**AM! Sam! Sam! Where the deuce is that fellow?"

I had rung the bell until I was tired and out of patience, and then called for him until I was out of breath, and still he did not come.

If you want to know who I am, allow me to inform you that my name is George H. Boomerang, better known in Farzedona, where I reside, as Captain Boomerang, late of the army. I am a man of considerable wealth, own the finest house in town, and keep, or did keep, a man by the name of Sam, whose duty it was to brush my clothes, hat and boots, and adjust my leg.

I refer to a wooden leg. The original leg ran against a cannon-ball during our late unpleasantness, and I have never seen it since.

Well, it was Sam's duty to take that wooden leg off at night, and to be on hand again in the morning to put it on before I got out of bed; and now you know why I was yelling "Sam! Sam! Sam!" And when I inform you that this was the morning of my wedding-day, perhaps you can imagine how anxious I was to get onto my legs as soon as possible.

Yes, ma'am, I was the lucky fellow that had walked into the affections—on a wooden leg, too—of the handsomest girl in Farzedona, and was that day to lead her to the altar. But I must get my leg on first, and as Sam wouldn't or couldn't come, I rolled out of bed and went hopping around on one foot to find my leg.

Now, my dear reader, when the surgeon trimmed my stump, after that little affair with the cannon-ball, he sawed it off uncommonly short; so perhaps you can faintly imagine my feelings, when, after hopping around my room, I found what I supposed to be my leg, but, upon attempting to adjust it, discovered that it was intended to go on below the knee.

"Do wooden legs shrink? That's just what I want to know," said I. And then I rang the bell and called "Sam!"

Well, Samuel didn't come, but my house-keeper, Mrs. Brown, did, and I was just going to ask her if she had ever seen or

heard of a wooden leg that would shrink, when she covered herself with a blush and retired in great haste.

She was a modest woman, you see, and—well, really, I don't think I was hardly prepared for company, as I only had one leg on and—nothing else to speak of.

"Mrs. Brown," I cried, "where is Sam?"

She answered me through the keyhole of the door. "He left the house last night about eleven o'clock—took his trunk with him and said he was going to leave town on the midnight train."

"Gone! Why didn't you tell me?"

"He said you knew all about it."

"Why, confound it, woman, I didn't know *anything* about it. Furthermore, ma'am, the scamp has carried off my leg, and left one in place of it which is certainly a foot and a half too short."

"Oh, what will you do?"

"That's just what I should like to know, ma'am," said I, staring fixedly at that leg.

"And it's your wedding-day," said she.

"Which is just what makes this little difficulty of mine intensely interesting," said I.

"Oh, isn't there some way for you to surmount the difficulty?"

"I can surmount a pair of crutches," said I; "but, dang it, ma'am, I don't want to be married on crutches!"

"It's awful to think of!" cried Mrs. Brown. And then I heard her leave the door and go slowly down-stairs.

"To be married at two o'clock, in church, and only a leg and a half to stand on!" I groaned. "O Samuel! Sam! I don't see how you could have had the heart to do it!"

I couldn't understand it at first. I had always used Sam well, paid him good wages, and he had seemed perfectly contented with his situation, and served me faithfully until now.

Suddenly an idea struck me, and the whole cause of Sam's perfidy was revealed to me.

"By heavens, it is Slympkins!" I yelled. "Slympkins is the cause of all my woe. He bribed Sam to steal my leg, on this my wed-

ding-day, and leave this insufficient prop in place of it."

Now, it is very natural to suppose that the reader would like to know who Slympkins is, and if he will only be patient I will endeavor to enlighten him.

Jim Slympkins is, or was, my rival. He is the only son of his father, who, by the way, is the most wealthy gentleman in Farzedona. Consequently, Jim doesn't do anything but smoke cigars, drive round town behind his splendid grays, and devote himself to the ladies generally.

Farzedona is noted for its pretty women. Statistics show that there are more pretty women to every square yard of ground in Farzedona than in any other city or town in the world. Now, my young friend, don't attempt to dispute this statement, for it would be useless. Figures won't lie.

Well, when I returned from the war and established myself in the halls of my fathers (they were built by my mother's first, but afterwards occupied by her second and third husbands, and consequently I always speak of my three fathers, instead of my forefathers), I somehow, in a very short time, found myself violently attached to seventeen of the most beautiful young ladies in Farzedona, and, singular as it may seem, they were the very young ladies whom Slympkins was courting.

I rather had the advantage of Slympkins. To be sure Slympkins had, or was expecting to have, much more wealth than I could boast of; but he hadn't any face, you know, or anything like it. Furthermore, the ladies always have been, and probably always will be, fond of the military, and Slympkins was not a military man. But what raised the very deuce with Slympkins was my wooden leg. When that wooden leg walked in, Slympkins had to walk out. Not that the dear creatures loved Slympkins less, but, "ah me, Captain Boomerang with his wooden leg was so chawming, you know."

Yes, I was charming. Anybody with half an eye could see that. Slympkins saw it distinctly, and it was very painful to him. It was painful as a boil to Slympkins, for he found himself shivering in the shade, while I was basking in the light of thirty-four of the most beautiful eyes in Farzedona.

It was a good thing for Slympkins, my return to Farzedona. You see he had contracted such a habit of roving from flower to flower, that at last it had become almost

an impossibility for him to settle upon any one particular rose. But I took the wind out of his sails, and before I had been in town a month, he was glad to concentrate all his affections upon one lovely flower.

Unfortunately for Slympkins, this flower happened to be the choicest one in my collection of seventeen; and so you see, when he concentrated his affections, I did the same, and before he had an opportunity to offer her his heart, I laid mine at her feet, and she accepted it and gave me hers in return.

I was sorry for Slympkins, but, dang it, my dear sir, what could I do? If he had chosen Miss Smith, Miss Brown, Miss Jones, or, in fact, any one but Miss Amelia Seymour, all would have been well. But it was really absurd for Slympkins to suppose that I would allow him, or any other man, to marry Amelia—at least, while I had a wooden leg.

I would have given Slympkins anything in reason, but it was truly ridiculous for him to think that I would give him Amelia. I told her so, and then I folded her to my breast, and she folded me to her breast, and I allowed her to sip the honey from my ruby lips.

Oh, what a beauteous creature she was! (and is, for that matter). She was tall, of course. As I stand six feet in my stockings, it would be positively ridiculous for me to fall in love with a short woman. I've always been in the habit of running from small women, for fear of being caught in the meshes of love's net. But Amelia and I looked extremely well together. In fact, I look pretty well any way you can fix me—that is, with my leg on; and Amelia, as I remarked of her immediately after my proposal, was a perfect model of beauty.

"There was no line, no subtle curve,
No graceful turn to painter known,
That did not her perfection serve;
And I had won her for my own."

Yes, I had won her, and poor Slympkins was fairly wild with rage. He had sworn to be revenged, but I laughed at his threats. I even sent word to him that Captain Boomerang didn't scare any to speak of; but you see I didn't know then *how* he was going to be revenged.

I saw it now very distinctly, on this the morning of my wedding-day; and I rocked myself to and fro in my chair and groaned, and bedewed that *short* wooden leg with my

tears; and I said to myself, in my rage toward Slympkins, that I would enforce the old Mosaic law and take an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, and a leg for a leg.

But this would never do for me, to be groaning when there was work to be done. I must prepare for the wedding, for you see I was bound to be married that day if I had to hop all the way to church.

I was seated at the breakfast table sipping my coffee half an hour afterwards, when Mrs. Brown came rushing in, crying:—

"O Captain, I know all about it!"

"What, the leg?"

"Yes, I think so. My daughter Eliza says she saw Mr. Slympkins give Sam some money last night."

"Yes, I knew it was Slympkins."

"More than that, Sam was married last night to Miss Seymour's maid, and they went off together on the twelve o'clock train."

"But, my dear woman," said I, "I don't care anything about whom he has married or where he has gone. The question is, has he carried my leg with him?"

"Why, I'm sure I don't know."

"Well, that is just what I want to know, ma'am. This isn't a time for trifling. You must remember that I am to be married to-day, and, by Jove, I want my leg!"

"Why don't you ask Slympkins for it?"

"Yes, and be laughed at. No, I don't intend to let him know anything about the trouble he has caused me. Besides, I don't believe he has got it."

"But what are you going to do?"

"Why, just as soon as I finish my breakfast I shall go to Mr. Seymour's, and tell him of the perfidy of my servant (and I shall take *that* leg to prove my statement), and unless he objects very strongly, I shall persist in being married upon crutches, rather than to have the wedding postponed. *That* would please Slympkins too much. It's what he expects; but I'll disappoint him, by Jove!"

Then I finished my coffee, and going to my chamber I took the ownerless leg, and wrapping it up in paper I came down, and ordering my carriage, rode out to Mr. Seymour's residence.

The old gentleman met me at the door. He took no notice of my crutches. With averted face he bade me good-morning, and led me into the parlor.

"I'm sorry, Captain Boomerang, very

sorry, but the wedding will have to be postponed."

"What, not on my account, I hope?" for you see I thought he had already heard of my loss.

"Amelia is"—

"What! my dear Amelia! Oh, has anything happened to her? Is she sick?"

"It's nothing serious, my dear Captain."

"But is she ill? Oh, where is she? Let me go to her. Do let me see her!"

"She's in her boudoir. Go; perhaps you can comfort her."

I did go. I burst into the room and found her lying on the sofa.

—"Pale

She lay, her dark eyes flashing through her tears
Like skies that rain and lighten; as a veil
Waved and o'ershading her wan cheek, appears
Her streaming hair."

I rushed forward to clasp her in my arms, but recoiled in surprise and amazement when I saw upon the chair in front of the lounge upon which she was lying, my—

"Great heavens! Amelia, where did you get my leg?" for you see I recognized the limb instantly.

"The le— O George Henry, I—I—can never be your wife!" she sobbed, fixing her liquid orbs upon the limb before her.

"But where did you get my leg?" I reiterated, at the same time unfolding the paper from the *short* one that I had brought with me.

"Where did you get mine?" she screamed, hopping up from the lounge, and clutching the limb that I still held in my hand.

"Yours?" I gasped.

"Mine!"

"Oh, this is too much!" I sighed, sinking into a chair.

Amelia sat down, too, and for about two minutes we gazed into one another's faces without speaking a word. At last I spoke:—

"O Amelia, Slympkins has played a cruel joke upon us! He bribed your maid and my man to change these limbs."

"Yes; and now"—

"But luckily we have found it out in season, and now the wedding can go on as if nothing had happened."

"What! would you marry me now?"

"Now!" I cried, clasping her to my breast. "I'd marry you now if you hadn't a leg to stand upon."

Then I kissed the dear creature, while

she laid her beautiful head upon my breast and cried for joy.

In conclusion, I am happy to inform the reader that the wedding took place at pre-

cisely two o'clock that day. Slympkins was not there, and I haven't seen him since; but when I do see him—well, I'll write you about it.

THROUGH SMILES AND TEARS.

BY MARY BUTLER.

HOW nice and cool it is in here, Phill!" The young man addressed turned his fair, refined face toward the speaker and smiled.

"Yes, Clytie," he said, soberly; "the veranda keeps it cool, you know."

Clytie was poising herself on the ledge of the window-sill, looking in through the open green-curtained window at the young man who was seated before a large half-finished landscape. She sprang in now, and, seizing the red "Tam o' Shanter" that was set all awry on her short, fair curls, flung it at a pair of stag's horns above the door. The cap missed them, and Clytie Grenville burst into a merry, girlish laugh, showing a row of white even teeth, as it settled on a battered old helmet a little lower down.

It had often been remarked that nature had made a mistake in dealing with this brother and sister—that Philip, with his dreamy, dark eyes and sensitive mouth, his rounded blue-veined temples and long, golden hair, was far more of a woman than Clytie, who was slim and active, with large, black-lashed, laughing, gray eyes set in a wide, short face that sinned against almost every canon of art.

But to one who studied the charming, piquant face it would tell a different tale. There was an expression of purity and pride in the large eyes, a gravity about the sweet wide mouth, such as no man ever possessed; and those who chose could see that Clytie's light-hearted gayety was but the outcome of youth and perfect health, and that the girl had a true woman's heart beating in her young breast.

"Were you on the river, dear?" asked the artist, looking admiringly at his sister.

He was always admiring her; for, if her face could boast only a certain saucy prettiness, her figure, from the curve of her long, white neck to the rounded wrists and ankles,

was simply perfect; and he was forever trying to transfer to his canvas the pliant gracefulness of her attitudes.

"Yes," she replied, standing behind him and regarding the painting as she spoke, "I have been on the river and—out to sea."

"But, Clytie, I asked you most particularly not to go below the bridge; it is so dangerous—the tide runs through the arches at such a rate"—

"Oh," interrupted the girl, two little red spots coming into her clear cheeks, "I—I wasn't alone, Phill!"

The young man stopped work, and, resting his hand on the mahl-stick, said gravely, and yet smilingly:—

"I am afraid, Clytie, that I shall have to send you back to school."

"Send me back to school! What nonsense, Phill! Why, I was nineteen in May last!"

"Well, then, I must get what someone calls a 'sheep-dog' for you."

"A companion! A horrid, prim old creature, who will make me keep my mouth closed and say 'prunes and prisms'! Do you want to make my life a burden to me?"

"No, dear, I don't; but put it to yourself—is it right to go out boating with a young man of whom you know absolutely nothing, except that he dresses and speaks like a gentleman, and spend the whole morning with him? Do you think it is right, Clytie?"

"Oh, this isn't Kensington!"

"Which means, I suppose, that what would be wrong at home is right here, because there are none of your friends to chatter about you in this little seaside village? That is not nice reasoning, Clytie."

"But I am not doing anything wrong, Philip."

"Certainly not, child"—looking round at the pure, proud face behind him—"but I think that you are acting very foolishly. If

one even knew who he was or anything about him! But we don't. Laurence Fane! I never heard the name before."

"But, Philip, we can't know everyone beforehand; and you are continually making new friends."

"I generally have some clew as to who and what they are; but of this young man I know absolutely nothing, except that he scraped acquaintance with me somehow and invited me on board his yacht. Why doesn't he go away? There is nothing on earth to be done here, and yet here he is, day after day and week after week, with that fine schooner of his anchored in the bay, dawdling in and out of this house just as if he owned it, or rowing you up and down the river and out to sea. I don't like it, Clytie, indeed I don't!"

The girl made no answer, though the hot, distressful color in her cheeks showed how his words moved her. The young artist applied himself again to his picture, and for some minutes there was silence between them.

Outside, the August sun shone upon the narrow strip of garden that sloped down to the river. Here there were a small boat-house and landing-stage with a punt moored to it, whilst a small mast with a white sail furled about it rested against the door of the boat-house.

Philip Grenville had left his London home and come with his sister to this quiet Welsh village to recruit his health, impaired by a too close application to his work in finishing a picture which was one of the successes of that year. He locked up his paints and brushes, vowing to himself to do nothing for three whole months but lie on the grass and read, or row on the rapid, shallow river with Clytie. But, before a fortnight had passed, his vow was broken; the artist was hard at work again, and his sister was left to provide her own occupations.

In spite of the river and the enjoyment of exercising her muscles in pulling against the rapid stream, in spite of her morning run over the bare hill at the back of the cottage, in spite of the beauty of the sands at night, where the moon found for herself a mirror in every pool left by the receding tide—in spite of all these attractions, Clytie began to grow restless, and to long for the pretty, artistic home at Kensington which she had ruled over since she came from school—for the pleasant five-o'clock teas, when her

brother lounged in from his studio, accompanied perhaps by a couple of bearded, velvet-coated men of his own craft, who would listen gravely to her chatter and criticise her sketches, while she and her pet girl-friends handed round the fragrant beverage. She longed even for those stately dinners and receptions to which she had begun to receive invitations since Philip's picture had been praised and "written up" in the leading journals devoted to art. Her restless vivacious spirit was turning regretfully from the peace and quiet of the little Welsh village back to the life and movement of London, when there suddenly fell upon her a content so perfect, a happiness so absolute, that she would have been glad to remain forever in the lonely cottage beside the rushing stream.

When the warm June evenings were longest, when the lilies in the pool beside the river stood out like white chalices among their leaves, Philip Grenville had walked up from the landing-stage with a tall, melancholy-eyed young stranger by his side, and introduced him to Clytie as "Laurence Fane."

It was then that the strange, happy calm fell upon the girl's heart. She felt as though she had passed through some shining portal into a glorified and halcyon region of which the world knew naught. The color rose in her face as he took her hand—rose and paled every time he fixed his dark, melancholy eyes upon her. Her gay, merry laugh, her overflowing animal spirits deserted her. To her brother she even seemed sad. But it was not sadness; it was "love at first sight, first-born and heir to all," that possessed her.

That was in June; and now, at the end of August, Laurence Fane's ninety-ton schooner-yacht *L'Hirondelle* still lay in the little bay beneath the headland, while her crew smoked and slept away the time; and their master—"the world forgetting, by the world forgot"—sunned himself in the light of Clytie Grenville's gray eyes and charming smile.

It was some little time before Philip Grenville awoke to the fact that his sister's long walks over the breezy Welsh hills, and boating excursions on the river, with Mr. Fane as her sole companion, ought not to go on. But he told himself that he had only to speak to her and she would at once see the propriety of discontinuing them. He had spoken; but somehow he had failed to impress her

with his ideas. He looked round at her once or twice as she stood behind him, tall and slim, in her clinging jersey and short gray skirt, and mentally decided that he would give her time to think over his words.

Presently she broke the silence.

"I don't like that picture, Phil," she said, nodding her head at it.

"Don't you, dear? The place it represents you seem to like well enough."

It was a painting in oils of an old two-arched bridge built of red sandstone and covered on one side with a profusion of ivy. Through the arches rushed a rapid stream, swirling and leaping about the broad buttress in the centre, and joining in a dark current the gleam of blue sea just seen beneath the arches.

The young artist was now bringing out the polished green of the ivy-leaves against the warm, red sandstone. He had depicted the rushing, turbulent movement of the water admirably, and the sunshine had broken, wavering shadows of the arches upon it; and he was a little surprised at his sister's remark.

"It oppresses me when I look at it, Philip," she went on, her large eyes darkening as she spoke. "Do you know, I think I must have seen it in some previous state of existence, and seen some dreadful deed done there."

"Why, pet, what a strange fancy!" rejoined her brother, smiling. "Could you show me what you mean in chalks?"

"I don't think so—it is so vague in my mind; and, besides, I have not touched a pencil since we came here."

"Say, rather, since Mr. Fane came here, Clytie."

"I don't know why you dislike Lau—Mr. Fane so much, Philip."

"I don't dislike him. On the contrary, I think him a clever, well-read, intelligent young fellow enough. But I do think that, when a man sets himself deliberately to win a girl's heart, he ought to go first to her natural protector—her father or brother, as the case may be—and explain who and what he is, and assure him that he is wooing her in all honor for his wife."

"But, Philip"—

"Now, dear, don't be angry with me"—noticing how her lip trembled and the color in her cheeks went and came. "I am not forcing your confidence in any way; but you know our mother left you in my care, and I

ask you, by the obedience you owe to her memory, not to give this Mr. Fane so much of your society until he comes honestly to me and tells me what he is and where he comes from."

For a minute the girl made no reply, but, with quivering lip and heaving bosom, seemed struggling with some overpowering emotion. Then, raising her head, she flung her arms about her brother's neck.

"O Philip, I have a secret from you, but not—not for long!" she sobbed out, and, releasing him, sprang through the window and vanished.

"Do you love me, Clytie?"

Laurence Fane put the question tenderly enough, but without a shade of anxiety. It had been asked and answered once for all more than a month before; and now, as he stretched his arm over the side of the little boat, making an idle pretence of fishing, he knew well what her reply would be.

They were three or four miles up the river, where the bare, wind-swept downs and long, sandy reaches to be found near the shore gave place to gently-rising hills and valleys clothed with trees and studded with houses. The river, too, instead of rushing noisily over a broad, rocky bed, was narrow and deep, silently swirling along between high, green banks with many a bend and turn. Near one of these the punt was moored, and Clytie and her lover were spending the morning fishing.

Laurence Fane was undeniably handsome and the picture of health and strength. The white boating-suit he wore displayed to perfection the muscular column of his neck and his tall, athletic figure. His straw hat lay in the bottom of the boat, and a ray of sunshine, falling through the leaves of an overhanging beech-tree, gleamed upon his smooth, dark head and danced in the warm brown of his eyes.

"Do you love me, Clytie?" he repeated, as the girl only answered him by a look and smile.

"You know I do, Laurence."

She was bending over the side of the boat, letting the water ripple through her slim fingers; but as she answered, she sat up, and, folding her hands in her lap, looked admiringly and shyly towards him.

"And are you pleased to be here with me now?"

"You know I am."

"Then why have you so persistently avoided me for the last five days? And why had I to spend half an hour coaxing you before you would come up the river this morning? And why, above all"—leaning forward and touching her white eye-lids, which seemed a little swollen—"why have you been crying, my darling?"

Clytie colored and hesitated a little before answering; at last she said:—

"Philip has been talking to me, Laurence."

"I thought as much!" he exclaimed, involuntarily clenching his right hand. "I knew that the serpent would come into our Eden at last, Clytie; and you see here he is—in the form of your loving brother!"

"Nevertheless I agreed with every word he uttered; and, Laurence, I was very near breaking my promise and telling him all."

"I am glad for your own sake, Clytie, that you did not. How could I trust you all my life if you failed me in a little thing like that?"

"It is not a little thing to me. Philip has a right to know all my actions."

"And you think it wrong to conceal anything from him?"

"I do. When I consented to it, I understood it was to continue only until you had written to and received a reply from your father. That was in July."

"I know," he said, fixing his eyes, at once bold and tender, upon hers; "but, you see, I love you so much that I cannot bear the thought of losing you—even of putting off our marriage; and I dare not show my father's letter to Mr. Grenville. It is so unfavorable."

"You ought to have told me, Laurence. You ought to have dealt fairly with me. Oh, I shall never force myself upon a family who do not want me!"

"Ah—there now!" exclaimed the young man, shifting his seat so that he could put his arm about her waist. "That is just what I was afraid of. Why, what is woman's love, after all, compared to man's? If you were a princess of the blood royal, and I one of the lackeys that opened your carriage-door, I would woo and win you, if I thought you loved me. If you were the richest heiress in all England, and I had not a shilling, I would make you my wife if you would have me, and be happy even if all my life I were called a fortune-hunter." He paused, and, raising her white, wet hand to his lips, kissed it, and continued, "that is

a man's love, Clytie. What do I care for your surroundings? It is yourself, my willful, proud, loving, little darling, that I want."

"How long am I to keep our secret?" asked the girl, in a low voice.

"How long will you keep it, Clytie?"

"Show me your father's letter—do, Laurence!"

"I am afraid. Oh, sweetheart, if you love me as I love you, what would my father's opposition matter?"

She turned her head so as to look straight into his eyes, and answered so earnestly that her cheeks paled instead of flushing.

"I do love you, Laurence. I love you with all my heart! Ah"—the crimson suddenly mounting into her face—"you know—why do you ask me?"

"And yet you can talk quite calmly of giving me up because my father does not approve of my marrying a girl not exactly in my own set."

"If it were right that I should give you up, I would do so, even though the act cost me my life!" replied the girl, her very soul shining through her gray eyes. "Nay, more—if I were doomed to live on for fifty or sixty years with only these three months to look back upon, I would still give you up, if I believed it to be the right course to pursue."

"Of course, of course!" exclaimed the young man, impatiently tapping his foot against the bottom-boards. "Some women positively like making martyrs of themselves. I do believe that a word from my father or your brother would make you give me up forever, even if you half broke your heart over it, while I might go down on my knees to you and implore you to wed me now at once without producing the slightest effect upon you. Clytie, Clytie, will you?"

He knelt down beside her as he spoke, resting his dark head against her arm, and raising his passionate brown eyes to hers.

Blushing and trembling, she shielded her face with her hand and faltered out:—

"I—I don't understand you."

"Will you brave your brother's anger, as I am prepared to brave my father's commands? Will you say to me, 'I trust you,' and let the Swallow spread her white wings and bear us across the Irish Sea? You shall be my wife there—fast as church and law can bind us. Oh, Clytie, do not refuse me! You love me; listen to your own heart!"

But the girl, pushing him away from her with both hands, cried out, so vehemently that it might have told him how near to yielding she was:—

"No—no! Oh, you are cruel to ask me! Do you think I would shame my name so? Take me home, take me home!"

Without a word, he removed his arm from her waist, and, rising, unmoored the boat and turned her bow down the stream. His ready acquiescence, his silence, and the cloud on his brow, as, with long, powerful strokes, he sent the little boat flying through the water, moved Clytie as the most passionate repetition of his request would not have done.

After watching him for a little while, she made a timid attempt at reconciliation.

"Are you very angry with me?" she asked, her lip quivering.

"No," he answered, lifting the sculls out of the water, and leaning his arms upon them. "I am angry with myself for being foolish enough to think you truer and braver than other young women of your class—that's all. I ask you to trust yourself to me, for twenty-four hours at most, before I can make you my wife, and you turn upon me and tell me that I want to bring shame upon you. Oh, you are like all your set, with every natural emotion drilled out of you—as cold and pure as marble, and with about as much heart!"

He dipped the sculls into the water again, while Clytie turned away her face that he might not see the tears that flowed from her eyes.

"If—if I knew your reasons," she stammered, sobbing—"if I had any clew as to how you are situated! But I know absolutely nothing; and you ask me to trust my name, my honor, to your hands."

"I did ask you, for you said you loved me, and I—idiot that I am!—believed you. But you have taught me my lesson now. I am to bear all the misery and wretchedness of waiting; and, if after eating away my own heart for years, I can finally say, 'Come, for my family are at last prepared to give you a daughter's welcome,' you will put your hand in mine, and be a good wife to me all your days. But, if not—if all that I can do or say will not make them receive you—then you will calmly bid me farewell, and go on your way without a shade on your brow or a pang in your cold heart."

If he could have known the agony every word he uttered caused the girl, and how

her passionate affection for him struggled with the sacred sense of right in her breast as he spoke, he would hardly have called her cold-hearted.

"I will not do what is wrong—I will not do what is wrong," she sobbed, gathering resolution from the very words as she repeated them; "and I feel—I know that it would be wrong to do as you ask me! If you would tell me why your people object to me, even who they are! I am so utterly in the dark!"

He made no answer, but, bending to the oars, pulled silently down the river until they reached the landing-stage opposite to the cottage. Then, as he assisted her to land and moored the little boat, he said, in low, intense accents:—

"Clytie, if you will meet me here to-night I will tell you the whole truth—by Heaven, I will! I don't know what the result will be; I dare say whatever affection you have for me will not stand the test of what I shall tell you. But, if you really would know what keeps me from going openly to your brother, what makes my father set his face so against our marriage, come down here at eight o'clock to-night, and you shall hear all."

The girl hesitated.

"Would not to-morrow," she began, doubtfully.

"No, I am not a model lover, Clytie. I cannot wait and wait, living on a smile or a word. To-morrow L'Hirondelle sets her sails and leaves this place forever; and perhaps, my love, heart of my heart, she shall carry you away also!"

He caught her hand, and, pressing it vehemently in both his, raised it to his lips, and the next moment was gone.

The girl watched his tall, white-clad figure as he went swiftly along the path by the river, turning back, ere he disappeared, to raise his hat and wave his hand to her. Then, with a sigh that was almost a sob, she walked up the garden.

Philip was singing; as she came near the veranda, she heard his sweet, high tenor voice. The words he was singing were those of an old-fashioned Irish song, to which he was accompanying himself on the piano:—

"Give me back, give me back the wild freshness of morning;
Its tears and its smiles are worth evening's best light."

The plaintive sweetness of the melody,

the longing regretfulness of the words, seemed to strike upon her heart. She stood listening until the song was finished, and then stepped through the open window.

Philip heard her, and called out, without looking round:—

"Come here, pet. I have found a big green book of Irish songs—things that used to be the rage fifty years ago; and some of them are simply exquisite. Listen to this."

He began to sing again, and she came and stood behind him, her hand on his shoulder. But the tears would fall, and he felt them upon his neck. With a start he turned, and catching sight of her face, saw at once that there was something seriously wrong.

"Clytie!" he exclaimed. "My little girl, what is the matter?"

She answered nothing, but bowed her head and wept as though her heart would break.

He drew her into his arms and let her weep there, as he had done once before, when he had carried her away from her mother's death-bed; and it was not until she was able to look up and check her sobs that he said again:—

"What is the matter, Clytie? Tell me—tell me, child."

"I have been up the river with Mr. Fane—did you not see me?"

"No." He removed his arm from about her, looking very much distressed. "Is that why you were crying, because you have disobeyed me?"

"Oh, no! But he has asked me to meet him again to-night—I know—I am sure—for the last time; and I will not unless you permit me."

She raised her head and looked at him as she spoke. She was determined to keep her word, but she felt as though her very life depended on his answer.

"Clytie," he said, gravely, "I must know something more than that. Have you given your heart to this man, whose very name three months ago you had never heard?"

"Yes, Philip."

"Great heavens! And I never knew—hardly suspected! Why does he not come to me and ask for you honestly? I am sure you would not give your love unsought."

"I cannot tell you!" sobbed Clytie. "I have told you as much as I can without breaking my word. Philip, will you trust me to meet him to-night? I know that it will be to say good-by forever."

"I think the fellow is playing fast and loose with you, child. I wish you would tell me a little more. What promise is this you have been drawn into?"

"Shall I break it and tell you, Philip?"

"No—unless your conscience bids you."

"Then can you trust me—knowing so little—to meet Laurence Fane to-night?"

Philip hesitated, looking at his sister. His heart was hot with passionate indignation against the man who he felt sure had won her young heart only to break it. But he made no exhibition of his anger, for he was trying to act a mother's as well as a brother's part to the orphan-girl.

"It is to bid him good-by, Philip," she went on, "or—to bring him to you."

She raised her head from his breast, and, with swimming eyes and quivering lips, watched his hesitation.

The expression of her face decided him. Though disfigured and stained with tears, there was yet an unsullied and unsulliable purity about it.

"Whom should I trust if I doubted you?" he exclaimed. "Go, if you think fit; but if you do not bring him back with you, I shall take the affair into my own hands to-morrow."

Clytie Grenville shivered and drew her long cloak closer about her as she walked down to the landing-stage that evening, a stormy sunset reddening the waters of the river, a rising wind bending the rose-bushes by the path.

Her lover was there before her; she could see his tall figure in relief between her and the darkening sky. He turned his head, and seeing her, walked over to the little boat-house on the bank, took from it the punt's masts and sails, and busied himself in shipping the first and setting the latter.

He took the girl's cold hand in his—for she was trembling—and assisted her on to the landing-stage.

"I knew that you would come; you are not quite marble yet, my Clytie!" he whispered, in the low, tender tones she knew so well.

"Yes, I have come," she replied, a certain hopelessness in her voice and manner which perplexed him; "but you do not want to go on the river?"

"Yes, I do—just for this once, Clytie. It was on the river that I first saw what I mistook for love in your eyes. It was on the

river that I held you for one blessed minute in my arms on the day that you promised to be my wife. And it is here on the river that, if you will, you shall break that vow."

Silenced and overawed, the girl raised no further objections, but stepped into the boat. Laurence Fane stood for a moment on the landing-stage looking back at the cottage, every window of which was reflecting back the now paling sunset. Then, raising his cap in a mocking manner towards it, he stepped down beside Clytie, who was sitting very pale and still, her hand on the tiller. Without speaking, he hoisted the mainsail and foresail, and then sat down with the main-sheet in his hand, watching the little boat as she began to glide down the stream.

"Let me steer," he said, presently. "I want you to listen to me."

The girl shifted her seat in silence, and, clasping her hands in her lap, turned her large dark gray eyes full upon him.

"Ah," he said, bending forward, "don't look at me like that, Clytie! Where has the love gone to out of your eyes?"

"Laurence," she cried, piteously—"Laurence, why do you keep me in suspense?"

"Because—before Heaven—I am afraid to tell you, lest I might lose you! You do not know what you have saved me from during the last three months. I was going to the dogs, Clytie, when I saw you first in Lady Lifford's drawing-room in May last!"

"I did not see you," interrupted the girl, in some surprise.

"No, of course not. It would be awfully bad form to see a gentleman before you were introduced to him, would it not?"

"I suppose you like to hurt me, Laurence!"

"Hurt you!" he exclaimed, taking her clasped hands into one of his. "I wish I could hurt you, Clytie; but all my passion and agony falls away from you as the sea foams up against a rock and falls down again."

"With what do you reproach me?" she cried, desperately, wrenching her hands away from his and covering her face with them. "You know that I love you—that no other man shall ever speak to me as you have spoken—that, if we part forever to-night, I shall be as faithful to your memory as if I were your wedded wife. What more can I say?"

"I would have trust as well as love, Clytie."

She raised her face, pale, resolute and proud.

"I know what you mean," she said; "you want me to steal away with you—alone—by night. You would wed me in secret, while all who knew me cried shame upon my name. But that you shall never do; I shall be yours only when you can take me openly and in all honor from my brother's hands."

Then there was silence for a little, Laurence seeming to give his whole attention to steering the boat round a bend in the river, and Clytie watching the pale crescent moon just rising over the hill behind the cottage. Suddenly she turned her head and asked:—

"How are we to get back? You did not bring the oars, and the wind will be right ahead."

"Run ashore down at the bridge and walk, I suppose. Clytie, do you remember the Fenton divorce case that the papers were so full of two years ago?"

"Lord Laurence Fenton? I heard it talked of—I did not read it."

"But you know that Lady Fenton left her husband—not alone—and that!"

"Why do you speak of it?" interrupted the girl, with a distressed look. "I know very little about it. What has it to do with us?"

"You shall know in a moment. Did you hear Fenton blamed at all?"

"Yes, very much. He was horribly cruel to her; he drank, he was a shameless profligate!"

"A pretty stiff list!" broke in the young man, with what seemed to her unaccountable bitterness. "Do you recollect anything else?"

"I believe the trial almost killed his father, the Earl of Kilmartin."

As she answered these questions she was conscious of a strange, shrinking fear at her heart which blanched her cheeks, and set her trembling from head to foot.

He read the dawning knowledge in her wide, frightened eyes, and, kneeling down beside her, clasped her with one arm about her waist.

"Let me hold you so for one moment, Clytie," he whispered, "for it may be for the last time. I may never look into your face again after to-night."

"But why?" asked the girl, recovering

herself somewhat. "Recollect, you have told me absolutely nothing all this time."

"Do you think a man who has led the life you have described—it's all true enough—I'm not disputing it—until he is twenty-eight, could win the love of a pure and innocent girl; could repent most sincerely of the vices with which he has stained himself; could resolve, by her aid and assistance to live such a good and useful and noble life that the sins of his youth would be forgotten, and only his upright and honorable manhood remembered? Can you believe that, my darling?"

But the girl, with a terror and despair in her face which changed it almost beyond recognition, flung herself to the other side of the boat, crying out:—

"Laurence, who are you? Why do you take the deeds of another person upon yourself? Oh, it cannot be—it is not possible!"

She stopped, unable to find words to clothe the dreadful thought in her heart.

"Yes," he answered, sullenly; "you know the truth now, Clytie. I am that Lord Laurence Fenton whom all the newspapers held up as a monster of iniquity a couple of years ago, who drove his wife into crime, and his father to the verge of the grave! And yet you—innocent child that you are—could find something to love in me!"

She made no answer, but sat with her face bowed upon her shaking hands.

"That is why I wished so much to be safely married before your brother found out who I was; and that is why my father does not wish me to marry below—that is, outside—my rank, lest people should say that the girls in my own set were afraid of me. Don't you see? For Heaven's sake, speak to me, child! You seem stunned."

"Put me ashore!" faltered the girl, raising her head and looking at him with wide open, horror-stricken eyes. "You were right; there can be no marriage between us. This is good-by—good-by forever!"

"Clytie," he exclaimed, dropping the tiller, heedless of the boat's course, and with both arms clasping her against his breast, "Clytie, my love, my bride, you are not going to desert me now—now, when you have kindled in me the resolution to retrieve my past and live henceforward a good and honorable life—now, when you have let me hope that I cannot be altogether bad when one so pure as you could love me? Oh, child, are you going to drive me back

into the life of iniquity from which you have lifted me?"

"Oh, set me on the shore!" she repeated, sobbing and shrinking back from him. "Do you think I would kneel at the altar with one who is already wed? Oh, never! And remember that, knowing this, you found me here a happy girl, and that you leave me a miserable, broken-hearted woman!"

"But I am not married! It was a divorce. I am free—quite free. I would never have sought you if it had been otherwise. Every hope and ambition of my heart centres upon making you my wife."

But the girl did not hear him. According to her simple creed, as long as the woman lived whom he had sworn to protect and cherish, he had no right to woo any other. And she had listened to his wooing, had allowed his caresses—nay, had solemnly promised to be his! The thought almost maddened her. She turned upon him like some timid creature driven to desperation.

"Let me go!" she cried, her breath coming in quick gasps. "Set me on shore! If you do not, I will fling myself into the river!" and, springing up, she set her foot upon the punt's rail.

In his excitement, Laurence had forgotten about the bridge which on two low arches spanned the river's mouth; and, both wind and stream being with the boat, she did not turn broadside on, but continued her course down the river until she came to the bridge, through which the tide was rushing like a mill-race. A dark shadow falling upon the sails and the noise of the water as it swept through the arches, recalled Lord Fenton to his senses. With a muttered oath he sprang upon one of the seats, and seizing the mast, attempted to unship it, knowing that if it struck the top of the arch the shock would most probably capsize them. Clytie saw him lift the mast out of its socket, towering in his magnificent height between her and the bridge; and then, all in a moment, while she was still looking at him, the back of his head struck violently against the low arch, causing the girl's whole frame to quiver terribly; and, without a word or a groan, the blood pouring from him, he fell full length at her feet. In the same instant the boat swung in towards the buttress that divided the arches, dashed upon it, and capsized.

How Clytie found herself standing in the water, supporting the bleeding head of her

lover upon her breast and clasping the dead weight of his body in her quivering arms, she never knew. What gave her strength to sustain her heavy burden and oppose her slender frame to the rushing water that surged and swirled almost up to her shoulder, she never knew. But she did know that on that strength depended his life—that if she let the rushing water tear him from her or beat her down upon her knees, the broad chest that was so slowly rising and falling in the clasp of her arms would be still forever. It was this that braced her young muscles and fired her woman's heart with the courage of a giant. She would not let him die! She could stand, swayed this way and that by the strong current, but never failing, never for an instant letting her insensible burden slip down in her arms, and crying with all her might for assistance. For she felt that, despite her utmost efforts, she could not long hold him above water; that she herself must soon sink; and then— She gave no thought to the death that stared her in the face; all her thoughts were concentrated upon the helpless burden in her arms—dearer now than he had ever been in all his matchless health and strength.

Again and again she raised her voice to its highest pitch, until the river-banks echoed back her cries.

For an instant she paused to listen and heard—oh, blessed sound!—footsteps and voices on the bridge. Instinct told her that they were some of the men belonging to the *Hirondelle*, and, gathering all her strength she cried out:—

“Lord Fenton is here; he is hurt! Oh, come and help me, or he will be drowned!”

The footsteps ceased. There seemed to be a hurried consultation; then came silence, and then a pause of a few minutes that seemed hours to the agonized girl. Then “Thank Heaven, thank Heaven!” burst convulsively from her lips, as two men, clad in jerseys and red caps, came wading, waist-deep, round the buttress, presently followed by a third.

She did not lose her senses, although she almost fell when they took their master's body from her arms, and, with no little difficulty, began to make their way from under the arch into shallow water. One of the men would have assisted her, but she signed to him to go with the others; and, when she had unfastened the clasp of her

long cloak, which, dragging and swaying about her neck, had been an additional impediment to her, she slowly followed them.

Even when she reached the shore, and, kneeling down by her lover's motionless body, took his wounded head upon her breast, her self-control and forethought did not leave her. Turning to one of the men, she sent him running for the young London doctor whom an adverse fate had induced to set up in the village, and bade another go to the hotel and prepare them for Lord Fenton's arrival, while with hands that seemed as strong as a man's, she tied her handkerchief about the wound in his head, from which the blood was still flowing.

She knelt there by him in the solemn moonlight, watching his pale face, with an awful doubt at her heart as to whether there was life there. She was wet from head to foot, and every breath of the night-air chilled her to the bone. Her tender arms were bruised, her feet, from which the little shoes were gone, all cut and bleeding. But she did not realize—did not feel her condition. It was of her lover only that she thought.

Would the doctor never come? Would her lover be left to die there in the chill night-wind?

Ah, now there were a number of men running down the sloping bank of the river, the doctor and her brother among them! Then, and then only, Clytie's strength gave way. She turned with glazing eyes and shaking lips to her brother, and fainted as he caught her in his arms.

“Where am I, Philip?” said Clytie, opening her gray eyes, and seeing a strange face bending over her—finding herself, moreover, in bed, to which she had no recollection of going.

“I am here, my pet. Don't be frightened. You are all right now.”

Her brother moved round from the foot of the bed as he spoke, and the doctor gave place to him. It was still night, the room being lighted with candles; but through the open window Clytie could see the moon shining upon the river. The sight made her start up on her elbow and cry out hurriedly:—

“Philip, where is he? Where is Laurence?”

“He is at the hotel, dear; he is doing very well, considering the frightful injury

to his head. A piece of the skull has actually sunk in on the brain—that is, the chief danger is”—— He stopped, hesitating.

“Go on,” cried the girl, sitting up, with wild eyes fixed upon his face—“go on! There is something more than that; I can see there is! Do you want to drive me mad?”

Philip looked round at the young doctor, who gave an assenting sign with his hand.

“I telegraphed for his father—I know who he is now, Clytie—his crew told me—and for Sir Maxwell Rotherhill; nothing is certain until he gives his opinion; we can only hope.”

“But—but—what do you fear? I must know!”

Her eyes went from her brother's face to the doctor's as she put the question, and he took the answer upon himself.

“Well,” he replied, slowly, “pressure of a part of the skull upon the brain, especially where Lord Fenton was struck, very often—indeed, almost always—produces idiocy, and to raise it would be highly dangerous to the life of the patient. I do not say this as an absolute fact,” he added, with professional caution, “until Sir Maxwell has seen him; but already I have observed symptoms which”——

He had said enough. With a low, moaning cry—“Oh, Heaven—oh, Heaven, was it for this I saved him?”—Clytie sank back insensible on her pillows.

Fifteen years! Time enough to rob the fairest cheek of its bloom, and turn the laughing, light-hearted girl into the grave maiden lady; time enough to clothe the new-made grave with the greenest grass, and twine the creeping ivy about the headstone; time enough to close the heart's gaping wound, and bring peace to the restless spirit; but not time enough for love to die. For that flower, once planted, will live on, though shut away out of sight, ignored, forgotten even by the very heart in which it is rooted, until, at the sound of the loved voice, at the touch of the loved hand, it bursts into bloom again.

So thought a tall, attenuated-looking man, with haggard, handsome face, as he paced slowly up and down one of the public picture-galleries, fixing his hollow, melancholy eyes from time to time upon the figure of a lady who was reproducing on a canvas before her one of the pictures on the wall.

Time had not dealt lightly with Clytie Grenville. The face that fifteen years before charmed all hearts with its gay, saucy loveliness was now a good face, a sweet face, but, ah, no longer a beautiful face! But the tall watcher, as he marked her steady application to the task before her, thought that it was the face of one who had found peace.

And he was right. There was nothing bitter in the grave lines of the lips, or in the large, quiet eyes. For fifteen years she had borne with gentle patience a sorrow such as falls to the lot of few women, and the gold of her nature came out refined and purified from the ordeal. She had even heard of his wonderful recovery under the hands of a skillful French surgeon, six months before—for she was now no stranger to the family of which she had once stood so much in awe. And for a time she suffered the old agony over again. Her cheeks blanched and her heart beat furiously at the receipt of a strange letter or the announcement of an unexpected visitor. But her disturbed spirit was soon at peace. He had forgotten her; she was among the things of that past from which he was divided by many years.

In her unceasing self-reproaches for the love she bore him, she sought out the poor, erring creature whom she thought her feelings wronged. She brought her away from the evil life she was living, and for five years supported and comforted her. The grass was green above her grave now, but Clytie still visited it; it seemed some link between her and the lover of her youth.

Clytie's had been a sad life, a life that had left traces on cheek and brow; but it had been a good life, a life that she could look back upon without shame or remorse.

Perhaps the watcher, as he passed and repassed her chair, guessed something of what those years—to him a dreary blank—had been to her. He stopped at last, and, hesitating slightly, came close behind her; but she was so used to people lingering to examine her work that she did not even turn round.

“Clytie,” he said, in a low voice, “Clytie, am I so changed? Do you not know me?”

She turned then, dropping brush and palette; and, as she saw that it was indeed her lover who stood there, restored and in his right mind, and oh, come back to her! for a moment her golden youth seemed to return, her pale cheeks kindled into rose, her gray eyes shone with a happy light.

"Laurence!" she whispered, as though mistrusting the evidence of her senses. "Laurence!"

"Yes, it is I, Clytie; you know—you have heard of my recovery?"

"Yes, oh, yes! Your father, the Earl, told me six months ago. I—I never expected to see you."

"And yet I have seen you, oh, often! I have watched you kneeling at the tomb of her who was once my wife; I have seen you sitting by my father's side, comforting him; I have seen you among your brother's children, and here in this gallery. Oh, it was by watching you that my health of mind and body came back to me!"

"Then why," asked Clytie, faintly, "did you not speak to me?" She was trembling, and her heart was beating as it had not beaten for fifteen years.

"Because I had not the courage. Oh, child, I am like a man raised from the dead

to walk among a new generation, and, but for one star, one hope, I would even now go back to my dreary prison-house! Clytie, there is nothing between us now. My love, my pure, brave love, will you take the feeble invalid into your heart as you took the young, strong man? Will you give me your hand, and lead me back to my place in the world?"

She could not lay her head upon his breast or clasp him in her arms there. She could only look into his eyes and say, "I will;" but she said it with all her heart and soul.

And they walked home to her brother's house together. To them the London streets were like a paradise, for Clytie had clung to the right and turned from the evil, and Laurence knew that now, led by her gentle hand, he would indeed lead that pure and noble life he had resolved upon so long before.

IN A MEADOW.

BY GUY ROSLYN.

HOW may a grateful mortal speak his thanks
For such a day as this? The rillet plays
Between a paradise of lilled banks,
Cool, sheltered by a million moving sprays.
The early sweets of life that long had been
Forgotten in the darkened days of pain,
Come back to give old charms to each new scene,
And withered hopes like trees grow green again,

SARATOGA, N. Y., 1888.

Midmost the leafage of the bending lane,
Half hid in shade, half shining in the sun,
Rumbles the heavy, rocking farmer's wain;
And after it barefooted children run,
To cheer the wagoner, and reach the hay
Plucked by the hedges; and old women sit
To knit in silence, and to nod away
The hours on cottage-steps with noon-light lit.

CENTENARIANS.

IN spite of all that is said of the wasteful effect which the hurry and excitement of modern times are supposed to have on human life, people are being heard of in many parts of the world existing far beyond the orthodox span of years, and so demonstrating in the most patent manner that even in this nineteenth century, and amid the struggle and stress which are among its prevailing characteristics, it is possible for men and women to live for a hundred years and more. It is almost an every-day occurrence to note, among the many interesting items of "vital" news that appear in the news-

papers, a paragraph containing an account of the "death of a centenarian," or giving publicity to the fact that some one of the human family has attained his or her hundredth anniversary. And so undoubted testimony is in this manner being established—notwithstanding all that is declared to the contrary—that men and women may be moderns and centenarians at the same time. It cannot, however, be affirmed that people live so long now as they did a century or two ago, if the evidence of the great ages to which some notable instances of our ancestors attained is to be relied upon. In these

days, a man is looked upon as a kind of miracle who has existed for a hundred years ere he "shuffled off the mortal coil." But what would be thought of that individual who was not called upon to do so until the record of his years showed the unparalleled number of two hundred and seven? The conditions of such a life existing on the earth to-day, or, indeed, existing at any time within comparatively modern limits, are almost impossible to imagine. Yet such a life is said to have existed in the person of Thomas Cran, who, we are told, died at the age of two hundred and seven, at St. Leonard's, Shoreditch, in the year 1588. The evidence of this case of longevity is said to be confirmed by the register of the parish of St. Leonard's, the date of Cran's death being given as having occurred on the 28th of January of that year.

The nearest approach to Cran's case is that published in what was then called the *Russian Petersburg Gazette*, in the early part of 1812, where and when it was stated, but merely stated, that a man had died in the diocese or province of Ekaterinoslav, between two hundred and two hundred and five years of age!

From the very long list of reputed centenarians we extract a number of the more interesting and notable, none of whom, however—if the recorded data are to be relied on—are younger than six-score years and ten; the number of cases of those whose ages range from one hundred and thirty down being very numerous. First of all, there is the well-known case of Thomas Parr, or "Old" Parr, as he is sometimes called. And yet he is a mere child compared with Thomas Cran, or some of the others on the list, where he only stands fourteenth in order of age, although he actually lived to be one hundred and fifty-two. The death of Old Parr occurred in 1635, the same year, it is curious to note, in which another "Parr" was born and destined, like his better-known namesake, to be celebrated as a centenarian. This latter person, probably a relative of Old Parr, whose grandson, John Michaelstone, lived till he was one hundred and twenty-seven, attained the age of one hundred and twenty-four, thus falling short of Thomas Parr by twenty-eight years. Standing only fourteenth on the list in point of age, Old Parr is the junior of the thirteen persons who are before him by periods varying from seven to

fifty-five years, this latter number being the difference in age between himself and Thomas Cran. Both of these men were contemporaries for the space of one hundred and five years! In point of age, therefore, after Cran, it may be interesting to give the names and ages of those individuals who lived for a shorter period than he, and yet for a longer period than "Old Parr." Excluding the two-hundred-year old Russian, we have on record the following worthy descendants of Methuselah: Peter Tortin, died at Temeswar, Hungary, in 1724, aged one hundred and eighty-five; a mulatto man at Fredericktown, Virginia, in 1796, one hundred and eighty; Gélour M'Grain, at Isle of Jura, in 1805, one hundred and eighty; Louisa Truxo, a negress, at Tucuman, South America, 1780, one hundred and seventy-five; John Room, at Temeswar, Hungary, in 1741, one hundred and seventy-two; Henry Jenkins, at Ellerton-on-Swale, Yorkshire, in 1670, one hundred and sixty-nine; William Edwards, at Cochen, near Cardiff, in 1668, one hundred and sixty-eight; a woman living at Moscow, in 1848, one hundred and sixty-eight; Jonas Warren, at Ballydoyle, Ireland, in 1787, one hundred and sixty-seven; Sarah Brookman, at Glastonbury, in 1793, one hundred and sixty-six; Judith Scott, at Islington, in 1800, one hundred and sixty-two; Jonas Surington, at Bergen, Norway, in 1797, one hundred and fifty-nine; James Bowles, at Killingworth, Warwickshire, in 1656, one hundred and fifty-nine. Afterwards there follows a long list of persons of various nationalities, whose ages range from one hundred and fifty-nine down to one hundred and thirty. In all, there are two hundred and ten; and of these thirty-one are given as having been one hundred and thirty years old.

The list may be divided into males and females; and of the former there are one hundred and forty-two as against sixty-eight of the latter, a curious statement to make to-day, when the proportion of females in this and in many other countries largely exceeds that of the males. Of the one hundred and forty-two old men, it is perhaps initially interesting to notice that seven of them were either physicians or surgeons, whose days, we may assume, were spent in helping to prolong the lives of their fellows, although they may have withheld from them that "elixir" which so long sustained their

own lives. Six of these disciples of Æsculapius were natives of Scotland, while the seventh was an Englishman, a Dr. Wm. Mead, aged one hundred and forty-eight. In all probability this was the oldest doctor that ever lived. A Dr. Moffat, or Movett, of Dumfries, approaches the nearest to him, at one hundred and thirty-nine years. Then we have a baronet, Sir Fleetwood Shepherd, who died in Essex in 1765, aged one hundred and thirty-one.

We may next mention a number of miscellaneous worthies who are credited with having cheated Death of his due for so long. Marc Albuna, an Ethiopian, lived a century and a half; a colored man died in 1850 at Spanish Town, Jamaica, in his one hundred and forty-second year; C. J. Drakenberg, a Norwegian, lived for a hundred and forty-one years, as also did William Evans, a Welshman; William Gulstone, an Irishman, died at the age of one hundred and forty; William Shapley, another Irishman, at one hundred and thirty-eight; William Beale, also a native of Ireland, at one hundred and thirty-six; and thirteen more of the sons of St. Patrick from that age down. It is remarkable that in the list of two hundred and ten persons who attained the age, and beyond it, of one hundred and twenty, thirty-one were Irish, and mostly belonged to the poor or peasant class.

To come now to the females, of whom sixty-eight are included in our list. Perhaps the most interesting names are those of two Irish ladies who belonged to the aristocracy. The Countess Desmond was said to be one hundred and forty-eight when she died; while her co-aristocrat, the Countess of Eccleston, is credited with having lived one hundred and forty-three years. Not so old as the former lady was a humbler native of Ireland, Biddy or Bridget Devine, who died at Manchester in 1845, aged one hundred and forty-seven, where, probably a hundred years before, she had toiled as a washer-woman. But perhaps the most pathetic case of feminine longevity in this list, if not on record anywhere, is that of a poor woman, a Mrs. Grey, of Northfleet, Kent, who was born deaf and dumb and died without ever, during one hundred and thirty-one years, being able to hear or to speak a word. Nor were uninteresting cases those of "Martha," wife of a Mohican chief, who died in 1806, aged one hundred and thirty; of a certain Rebecca Fury, a black woman of Falmouth, Jamaica,

aged one hundred and forty; and of Sarah Anderson, a free black, who survived forty years after receiving her freedom on her hundredth birthday. But the oldest woman on record was also a negress, Louisa Truxo, a native of Tucuman, South America, where she died in 1780, at the reputed age of one hundred and seventy-five.

Our list is by no means exhausted; but the examples we have given are perhaps sufficient to interest the reader. It is not to be supposed that the race of centenarians has become anything like an extinct *genus homo*. We frequently read of genuine cases occurring, most of them being poor persons, or persons living in the humblest walks of life. And with increased sanitary blessings, there is no reason why those cases should not multiply. By the ordinary laws of life, no man can be certain he shall continue in existence a single year, much less any definite number of years; but with an average constitution, he may fairly expect his days to be long in the land, if he keep the divine commandments brought down and proclaimed by science; for the complete cycle of physiological life is a hundred years, and it is not impossible, though, under the varied conditions of life it is exceedingly improbable, for a man to live for such a period of time. It is calculated, however, that in round numbers one in a hundred thousand lives is a centenarian.

In closing this article, and by way of a practical application of the obvious moral of the subject, the following delineation of the "portrait of a man destined to a long life," drawn by the German physician Hufeland, may not be without point and interest: "He has a proper and well-proportioned statue, without, however, being too tall. He is rather of the middle size, and somewhat thick-set. His complexion is not too florid; at any rate, too much ruddiness in youth is seldom a sign of longevity. His hair approaches rather to the fair than the black; his skin is strong, but not rough. His head is not too big; he has large veins at the extremities, and his shoulders are rather round than flat. His neck is not too long; his abdomen does not project; and his hands are large, but not too deeply cleft. His foot is rather thick than long, and his legs are firm and round. He has also a broad-arched chest, a strong voice, and the faculty of retaining his breath for a long time without difficulty. In general, there is

complete harmony in all his parts. His senses are good, but not too delicate; his pulse is slow and regular. His stomach is excellent, his appetite good, and his digestion easy. The joys of the table are to him of importance; they tune his mind to serenity, and his soul partakes in the pleasure which they communicate. He does not eat merely for the sake of eating, but each meal is an hour of daily festivity, a kind of delight attended with this advantage, with regard to others, that it does not make him poorer, but richer. He eats slowly, and has not too much thirst. Too great thirst is always a sign of rapid self-consumption. In general, he is serene, loquacious, active,

susceptible of joy, love and hope, but insensible to the impressions of hatred, anger and avarice. His passions never become too violent or destructive. If he ever gives way to anger, he experiences rather a useful glow of warmth; an artificial and gentle fever without an overflowing of the bile. He is also fond of employment, particularly calm meditation and agreeable speculation; is an optimist, a friend to nature and domestic felicity, has no thirst after riches or honor, and banishes all thought of to-morrow."

How many mortals living in this great age of sensational thought and action, will say that they substantially conform to the above ?

TRADING IN OCEANICA.

I. P. MILLER.

STROLLING along Circular Quay, in Sydney, New South Wales, one afternoon, looking at the shipping, and blowing away the weary hours in a cloud of smoke from a much-loved old clay pipe, my attention was attracted by a schooner of one hundred and thirty tons burthen, lying at anchor off in the stream. There was nothing wonderful about her, either for build or rig; she was merely a handsome schooner; but the extreme neatness of everything on board, from rail to truck, was eminently gratifying to the eye of a seaman. I was sitting on an old spar, landed on the quay from some vessel, with my back against a mooring-post, when a man passed me, and, stopping on the edge of a quay, hailed the schooner:—

"Adventure ahoy ?"

"Ay, ay," was immediately responded; then a man appeared in the waist, looking towards the shore. He waved his hand to the person who had hailed, and disappeared; and in a few minutes a small boat containing two men pulled around the schooner's bow from the further side, and headed for the boat-landing near where I sat.

As the boat approached, the stranger on the wharf stepped down from the sill on which he had been standing, and moved towards the steps that led down to the platform; and much was I surprised to recog-

nize in the schooner's captain (for such he was) an old friend of mine on the gold-fields of Australia, named Graham.

"Halloo, Graham!" said I; "how are you, old fellow? What are you doing here in Sydney?"

"Murray, by thunder!" exclaimed Graham. "What, in the name of mischief, are you doing here?" at the same time extending his hand and giving me a warm grip. "Come off aboard the schooner, that one off there, the *Adventure*; I'm trading with her—have been on two trips, and am going out to-morrow or next day on another. Come off; we'll have a yarn. What have you been doing with yourself, anyway?"

Having nothing else to do, and as Graham was a good fellow, and had been a good mate on the diggings, I accepted his invitation, and was soon introduced to his mate, and went into the schooner's cabin. The latter was not large, of course, but numerous muskets, three very heavy double-barreled shot-guns, a dozen cutlasses and half a dozen revolvers, evidently all carefully looked after and highly polished, were disposed in racks or arranged on the walls of the cabin, or around the mainmast, which came down through the fore part of it.

"Halloo! what sort of a hooker have you got here, Graham?" said I, in some surprise. "Do you go 'trading' on such capital

as that?" pointing to the muskets and cutlasses.

"Why," answered Graham, laughing, "I told you I was trading; and we have to carry all that stuff for safety. But that isn't all our armament, either. We've got a little brass cannon, a four-pounder, that we mount on the to'-gallant fo'-castle, in place of the capstan—unship the capstan and mount the gun. We aren't to be sneezed at, I tell you."

"No, I shouldn't think you were," said I; "but where in the Old Harry do you trade to, that you have to carry all this fighting gear?"

"Where do I trade to! Why, where should I go to trade, except down among the islands? I'm going to make a cruise among the King's Mills Group this time. Shall touch at Tanna Island first, and get two or three Tannamen; they're good fellows, and we have 'em for interpreters. I know lots of 'em; had four with us last time. Then if I can pick up a cargo of sandal-wood or oil, cocoanut oil, I shall run across to China and sell it, and bring a cargo of tea and silk back to Sydney on the owner's account."

"Oh, ho, I understand! you're going on a sandal-wooding trip. Why didn't you say so at first? I thought you were going to do a little bit of pirating when I looked at your armory," I answered.

Graham laughed.

In conversation with Graham and the mate I discovered that "trade" not only meant the exchange of one kind of goods for another, but was also applied to the goods exchanged; and that the "trade" taken out to exchange for sandal-wood and cocoanut-oil consisted principally of gaudy calico, brilliantly-colored glass beads, tobacco, rum and cutlery, the last being the very meanest and cheapest it was possible to procure—made to order, in fact—and the other articles but little better. This wretched "trade" was traded for the wood or oil, and exorbitant prices demanded and obtained.

I had heard of "sandal-wooders" being taken by the islanders on more than one occasion, and knew that the King's Mills natives were ferocious cannibals; so when Graham, at supper-time, broached the subject of my accompanying him on his trip, I replied:—

"Well, Graham, I don't know but what I'll go; I should like to see something of those Pacific Islands. But don't the natives

there eat up everybody they can get their hands on?"

"Well, what if they do?" said Graham. "Let 'em eat; we needn't care as long as they don't eat us; and we'll take the best care of that. You see our fixin's here (pointing to the guns and pistols); them's all for arguments to persuade the natives to let us alone. Come, now, I want a second mate; will you go?"

"I'll go, yes; but I won't go as second mate, for I'm not a schooner sailor. Give me yards and square sails, and I know what I'm doing; but these fore-and-aft sails I'm not used to. I'll go as supernumerary, if you like."

"No, you won't go as supernumerary or any other ary, not in this packet. We've got no real work to do till we get among the islands. I'll stand watch with you myself till you get used to schooner work, and you'll like it."

I agreed to go, and two days later we were bound away for Tanna Island, with a fine breeze and a pleasant sky. Nothing worth noting occurred until we reached the island. Here Graham found two of his interpreters of the previous trip, and took them on board; and another native, a chief of some kind or other among a tribe on one of the King's Mills Group, also got a passage down to his native island with us. This chief or patriarch, or whatever he was, was well-known to Graham, who had purchased sandal-wood of him on his previous trip; and we were all particularly careful not to annoy him on the passage down from Tanna, as he gave us to understand that he had as much sandal-wood as would load the schooner; and we wanted it, of course.

Captain Graham knew the character of the natives, and told us that probably the old chief had not more than a few boat-loads at most, which he magnified much to make himself of consequence among us; and this proved to be the case. He had four boat-loads, each boat carrying about half a ton; and that we bought for two or three knives and about six yards of calico, with a pound of tobacco and a handful of beads thrown in.

When we arrived at the island we put old Daisy (as the sailors called the native) on shore at once, he promising to have the wood down to the beach in the morning; and we then stood off with the schooner till daylight should come. Pistols and cutlasses had been distributed among the crew as

soon as we sighted the land, and Graham and I spent the evening in carefully examining and loading the muskets and shot-guns, the latter being heavily charged with buck-shot.

With the first streaks of daylight we stood in for the land, and brought the schooner to the wind about two miles off. The boat, built something after the style of a whale-boat, but shorter and wider, was got ready, the "trade" being stowed away in the bow and under the stern-sheets. Each man had a revolver stuck in his belt; two cutlasses and one of the shot-guns were laid down in the stern, and the largest of the double barrels was stood up in the bow. A keg of water and some biscuits and beef completed our outfit, and soon after sunrise we pulled away for the shore, Captain Graham standing at the steering-oar and four of us rowing, I pulling the bow-oar.

We had not pulled more than half way to the island from the schooner when a number of natives appeared on the flat white beach of a little cove, for which Captain Graham headed the boat; and as we neared the shore the natives made signs to us where to land. When within about two hundred yards of the beach, the skipper quietly remarked, half to himself and half to the natives:—

"No, you don't, not if I know anything about it." And just as quietly he gave the orders to us, "Hold water, your port oars, pull round, starboard," at the same time sweeping the boat round with the long steering-oar, till her head lay to seaward.

I was somewhat surprised at this movement, for we could see several pretty good piles of what I was assured was sandal-wood near the beach.

"What's the matter?" I asked; "ain't you going to land and get the sandal-wood?"

"Land! no," was the answer; "but we'll get the wood, never fear. Don't you see how shoal the water is here? Well, we should have to beach the boat, which isn't gospel in this trade, no how, unless you are inclined to be made soup of. These black imps have picked the place out a-purpose, most likely; but they'll bring this wood to the place I pick out; see if they don't."

As we pulled out of the cove and along shore, the natives screamed and made motions for us to return, holding up pieces of the wood to show that they were ready and

willing to trade; but Graham took no notice of them. We kept on until we found a spot where the water was several fathoms deep close in to the shore, which suited Graham's ideas exactly. The steward, who had pulled the stroke-oar, now took the skipper's place at the steering-oar; the two seamen moved to the two after oars, to make as much room forward as possible; and Captain Graham took his station at the bow.

"Now, Murray," said he to me, "fleet aft onto the next thwart, turn round, take that half-grown cannon (the big double-barreled shot-gun), and stand by to blow the first darkey that shows mischief clean to the devil; keep both barrels full-cocked, and don't take your fingers off the triggers for anything or anybody; but be kind o' careful and don't shoot *me*. Pull in, boys, keep her sterning fair out to sea, steward, and be sure you don't let her swing broadside on to the beach."

In a few moments the boat's stern touched the rocks, and the skipper continued, "Lay on your oars, men, and stand by to stern off at once. Murray, keep your weather eye lifting, now, and if there is any ugly-lookin' move made by the darkeys, let rip into 'em at once; there's no law here, you know—we've got to take care of ourselves."

"Do you always have to be as cautious as this?" I inquired.

"Well, yes; at any rate, I always am just as cautious. There have been trading-vessels taken by the natives among these islands more than once, and I don't mean that they shall have our hooker, not through any fault of mine, anyway."

The natives soon made their appearance at our landing-place, but brought no wood; they were urgent that we should return to the shoal water of the cove, offering to bring the wood out to the boat if we would do so. But our Tannaman gave them to understand plainly that if they wanted to trade they must bring their sandal-wood down to where the boat now lay, and nowhere else.

At this they seemed displeased, and threatened not to trade with us at all; but the interpreter was not to be "bluffed" by them. Holding up a piece of calico printed in the most glaring colors—jet-black, scarlet, green, blue and yellow, in stripes six inches wide, looking like a rainbow gone mad—he told them, in their own lingo:—

"All right; you keep your wood, and we'll keep this splendid 'tappa'."

The sight of the gorgeous calico was too much for the natives (no wonder; one look at it was enough to upset almost anybody), and very soon the sandal-wood began to arrive at the boat.

Now the trade commenced. Old Daisy on the shore and our Tannaman in the boat kept up an unearthly jabbering, each depreciating the other's wares and praising up his own, after the manner of more civilized nations; and Captain Graham excited the covetousness of the blacks by holding up the marvelous calico, brandishing the huge cast-iron knives, or letting a handful of colored glass beads, as big as marbles, run from his hand into a tin pan. But a dozen times, while the trade was progressing, he drew my attention to my own particular duty by saying:—

“Mind what you’ve got hold of, Murray; we’re depending an almighty lot on you.”

So I did “mind what I had hold of,” though I could not detect any arms among the natives except their clubs.

At last we had received as much of the wood as our boat would carry, and Graham invited old Daisy to go off with us to the schooner, promising him a glass of whiskey. To any one who has ever been among these islands, it is needless to say that old Daisy accepted the invitation, and soon stowed himself away on the top of the sandal-wood. As all was now ready for our return to the schooner, I laid the gun down to take my oar; but before I could touch the latter, Graham spoke to me in a way to make me pick up the gun again pretty quick:—

“Look out, Murray! keep your gun and your place till we’re clear of the shore; do you want these black devils to knock out all our brains? Stern, the after oars, stern off into deep waters; don’t lay her round yet, steward; wait till we’re a good ship’s length clear.”

But the natives showed no inclination to profit by my thoughtlessness, and we were soon all down to the oars, and an hour later were safely on board the schooner, and the valuable wood in her hold.

On the way off Graham told me that the natives knew well the difference between the destructiveness of a pistol-ball and a heavy charge of buckshot; and that, well-armed with revolvers as we all were, the big shot-gun probably had more influence in keeping them quiet than all our other arms put together. He told several yarns, some

of them pretty tough ones, about the natives and their doings, and spoke of old Daisy’s wife, whom he had seen on the Adventure’s last trip, as an immensely fat woman.

Directing the interpreter to inquire of old Daisy regarding the welfare of his obese spouse, that worthy coolly replied that she had gone; voluntarily adding, by way of explanation, that she had got so fat as to be unfit for work, “so he clubbed her and ate her up!” This was a new plan of utilizing a wife to me, and I vowed that old Daisy should not have one of our four glass tumblers to drink out of; but Graham and the other men had a good laugh at the circumstance. But I made old Daisy drink his grog out of a tin dipper.

It was too late when we got on board to go for another boat-load that day, but next morning we went again, carrying old Daisy with us. We remained about this island for a week, and then, having secured all the sandal-wood to be obtained there, we left for a new field.

Three months of very successful trading filled our hold two-thirds full of sandal-wood; and we had secured nearly thirty barrels of oil, besides. All the trading was conducted with the same caution as at first displayed; I constantly holding the big gun ready for an instant discharge, whenever the trading was going on, though no signs of treachery were ever detected. Graham was beginning to talk of starting for a run across to China in a week or two, when one morning a circumstance occurred which sent us into Hobarttown, in Tasmania, instead of Foo-Choo-Foo, in China.

We were near one of the largest and least known islands of the group, the evening previous to the occurrence which so altered our destination, and Graham remarked at supper that he expected to get a good lot of wood here, for he didn’t know of any trader having called at this island since the Spec was lost.

“Wasn’t it somewhere here she was taken?” asked the mate.

“Yes,” answered the skipper; “there’s nothing certain known of how she was lost; none of her crew ever got back to tell the story. But the natives on this island had lots of her trade among ’em, and much of her gear and sails; the Victoria (a gunboat) found ’em when she came down this way looking for the missing missionary barque that was wrecked about that time. I knew

the Spec's skipper well, and he was a good sailor, too; but I always told him he was too careless when he was trading; and I think the natives took the boat first, and then attacked the sloop, or else boarded her in the night with canoes, and killed all hands. They told the man-o'-war they didn't, though; said the sloop drifted on a coral reef in a calm, when there was a big sea on, and all got drowned. But they lied—of course they lied!"

"Well," replied Moran, "they won't board us in the night with canoes; if they do, there will be a confounded row, that's all. Keep a good lookout in your watch, Murray, and don't be afraid to rouse all hands if you see or hear anything you don't like. We'll look out for our hides, for we've got too good a voyage aboard to get used up now."

"Light O!" sung out one of the watch on deck, at this moment; and the little cabin was soon deserted. The schooner was slowly head-reaching under short sail, and had got far enough past a point of land to open out the shore beyond, which had been hidden from view as we approached the island in the afternoon. A large fire was burning on or near the beach, but we were too far off to see who was near it or what they were doing. The mate suggested that it might be a signal for us, but Captain Graham thought such was not the case; had it been intended for us, it would have been kindled on the other side of the point, for which we were heading at sunset, the schooner's course being always changed after dark when we were near the islands, to guard against any possible attack from the shore.

"Well," said the skipper, "we shall find out to-morrow if it means anything; just keep your wits about you to-night. Let the schooner crawl off as she's going now till eight bells (midnight), and then ware her. Call me at four o'clock, and rouse everybody if you've the least cause, or think you have." And with these instructions he went below.

I had the first watch, and the mate soon followed the skipper's example (he having to turn out at midnight to relieve me), and I was left alone, so far as they were concerned, though two seamen were walking in the waist, and the interpreter was looking over the rail in the direction of the island. The night was very still and the sea smooth, the schooner forging ahead not more than two knots; but there was probably a current

there, as the vessel had got past another point and shut in the fire before the bell was struck for ten o'clock. By eleven it was a dead calm, and the sails hung motionless, save for the occasional flapping caused by the slight roll of the schooner. The helmsman had made the wheel fast by twisting the tiller-ropes together with a belaying-pin, and was seated on a bucket which he had turned bottom-up on the deck. [We didn't pretend to keep man-o'-war-discipline in that craft.] I was leaning against the rail, talking to him, when he suddenly stopped in the middle of a sentence and asked, "Did you hear anything off there, sir?" at the same time pointing to the headland we had passed shortly before.

"No," said I; "did you?"

"Yes, sir; I heard a crash like a tree breaking off, and then I thought I heard a yell," said the seaman.

"It's strange I didn't hear it," I said; "'twas imagination, Tom."

"No imagination there, sir; I heard noises, dead sure," said Tom.

"Well," I answered, "the noises won't hurt us, at any rate; we'll keep a good lookout till morning. I don't think the schooner has been seen from the land yet."

"Won't you rouse up the captain and mate, Mr. Murray?" continued Tom. "I would, sir. I don't pretend to tell you your duty, sir, but I've seen more of these islanders than you have, and you can't be too careful how you work round 'em. And this is one of the worst islands anywhere round, so they say."

I did not place implicit credence in all "they" said, but I knew that old Tom was a cool, trusty seaman, and that he had made a number of trading voyages previous to this one; so I replied, "Well, Tom, I don't suppose it will do any harm; step below, and awaken Mr. Moran; I'll see what he has to say."

In a few moments the mate appeared, and having heard my report and questioned Tom, he called the seamen from the waist and asked if they had heard any sounds. They had not; but the Tannaman had, and came aft to report the noises as the seamen were going away forward. The mate asked him what he supposed the natives were doing on shore; but he could not say, unless they were either fighting among themselves, or were having a cannibal feast; but neither hypothesis would account for the noises.

Moran did not go below again, and when my watch was up I rolled myself in a blanket and had a nap on deck—boots, revolver and all. We were not further disturbed, and Captain Graham was not called until four o'clock, as he had directed.

After listening to our story he coolly observed that he didn't care how much the natives fought with and ate each other, and that I had done wrong in not calling him at once on hearing the seaman's report; but that he would find out if there was anything up as soon as it was light. As the schooner was becalmed, the boat was got ready to start at once, two shot-guns and three muskets being put in; and having snatched a cup of strong coffee and a bite of bread and beef, we pulled away for the point at about three o'clock, daylight already enabling us to see that besides our boat the schooner was the only object on that part of the Pacific. We pulled in near enough to the shore to see the faint line of white made by the ripple on the beach, and coasted along to the extremity of the point beyond which we had seen the light, without discovering any signs of the natives. But as we rounded the point Graham, who was standing in the stern at the steering-oar, suddenly exclaimed:—

"Avast pulling; what is that? By the Eternal! they have got a wreck there. Here's the devil to pay, men; pull ahead, and let's get out of their sight—if they haven't seen us already—pull ahead."

The object which had caused the captain's exclamation was a brig, apparently close in shore, and half-concealed from our view by the trees on a low projection of land; and as we shot the boat ahead in obedience to Graham's orders, a few strokes sufficed to shut her in behind the point nearest her, as we were still following the shore line; and having rounded the tongue of land which concealed the schooner from the natives, were pulling down the other side of it into a small bay, or rather a large cove.

We kept about a pistol-shot from the shore until we arrived at the low point on the opposite side of which we supposed the brig was ashore, without seeing any of the savages. Near the extreme end was a wide white beach which extended right up to the trees and bushes, the latter not being very thick at this point.

Graham gave up the steering oar to the steward, loosened his knife in his sheath, took one of the double-barrels in his hand,

and directing me to stand by with the big shot-gun, as usual when trading, ordered the steward to lay the boat's nose on the beach. As soon as she took the ground he stepped out into the shoal water, told us to lay on our oars as close in as we could and not touch the bottom, and moved cautiously towards the trees, with his gun ready for instant use.

We waited anxiously for a few moments after he disappeared among the bushes, and I raised the gun to my shoulder as I saw a sudden stir near where he had entered; but my alarm was groundless, for the movement was made by Graham himself. Casting his eyes behind him, to see the position of the boat, he laid down his gun, advanced on hands and knees to a bush, peered through it for a moment, and then beckoned to me to join him. Taking my trusty weapon with me, I was soon at his side.

"Look there," whispered Graham, opening the bush a little; "see what the black devils are at."

Looking where he directed I *did* see. A large brig, whose wooden davits and black sails would have told she was a whaler, without the spare boats turned up on her skids, was ashore on a reef within two hundred yards of the shore, evidently hard and fast. She was careened from us, so that we could not see her deck; but the noise on board, an occasionally seen head, a whale-boat full of natives propelling themselves with paddles towards the vessel and the crowd of savages, of both sexes and all ages, on the beach, spoke plainly of one of the terrible tragedies with which the history of these seas abounds. The remains of a large fire were still smoking and smouldering near the water's edge; and doubtless it was the light of this we had seen the evening previous.

"What's to be done, Graham?" I asked; "we couldn't do anything with the brig if we had possession of her, for her back's broken; she's hogged full three feet amidships."

"Oh, the brig's done for; but what are they trying to do?" answered my companion. "There's two fellows in the maintopmast crosstrees; you can see 'em once in a while past the foretopmast (the brig was so nearly bow to us that the mainmast was partially hidden by the fore), and these black thieves don't go aloft for nothing, aboard ship. We're safe enough here, for all the natives are around the wreck. Just

step down to the boat and bring up the glass; you'll find it in my jacket in the stern-sheets."

I procured the glass (a small opera) and handed it to the captain, who looked earnestly through it at the brig for a few moments, and then turning to me said, with more excitement in his tone than I had ever heard before:—

"By the Eternal! Murray, there are white men there yet alive! Look into her cross-trees!" at the same time handing me the glass.

The brig was not a quarter of a mile distant, and I soon satisfied myself that one of the two men aloft was a white man, and that he had some weapon; the second man appeared to be a native. Returning the glass, I told Graham what I had made out; and again he surveyed the wreck. Soon he spoke again:—

"My God! Murray, what can we do? There's two or three of the natives going up the rigging, and one of 'em has got a cutting-in spade; those men will be butchered right before our eyes. Ha! hold on a bit; that fellow in the crosstrees has got a hatchet. Well done! hurrah! he's cut the topmast rigging and let the whole lot down on deck together. By thunder! Murray, we can't leave them chaps to fight it out alone; what say?"

"I am ready to go where you wish, Captain Graham," said I.

"All right," he answered. "But I'm going further in their way, so that I can see her deck for a minute; I won't be gone long, nor go far; you get into the boat and wait."

I did as he directed, and told the boat's crew, who were anxiously eager for information, what we had seen; which drew from old Tom the remark:—

"That's the 'imagination' I heard last night, Mr. Murray."

In a few minutes Captain Graham returned, and informed us that there were fifty or sixty natives on board the brig, and that they were trying to cut down the mainmast, with axes probably belonging to the vessel; but that they did not know enough to cut the shrouds away first. Even while he spoke there was a great outcry, and then a crash and a splash. "It's all over," said Graham, quietly; "but I'll take a look once more." He went up to our former lookout place, and almost immediately returned, seemingly much pleased,

"Those chaps have weathered 'em again," said he; "they have got across on the stays to the foremast, and are safe for a spell yet. But we must help 'em soon, if at all, for the foremast will be cut away now, certainly."

"Well, let's bring up the schooner and practice on 'em with the gun," said I.

"That would do, if we could manage it, which we can't, in a dead calm," replied Graham; "we must tackle 'em with this boat and boat's crew, or else leave 'em alone. What is the word, men, will you face it? There are lots of natives, and they have got two white men penned up aloft in the brig; there is only one boat in the water there, that I saw, and that's a whale-boat, which these fellows can't paddle as fast as we can pull with two oars. There are some canoes, but you know what kind of dug-outs these islanders have—they can't trouble us much. Will you try to save those men? yes or no?"

"Yes," was the unanimous response; and Graham at once made his arrangements for the attack.

I was to remain in the bow with the two double-guns, my own revolver and a cutlass for my amusement. Graham himself took the steering oar; and the two seamen, the Tannaman and the steward were to pull the oars. The muskets were in the stern, where Graham could put his hand on them at once, in case of need.

"Now, Murray," said the skipper, "don't waste a shot. Make sure work when you fire. You know how to use arms, and now is the time to do it."

"Yes," said I; "I know how to use all these tools except the cheese-knife; I never used a cutlass in my life."

"Well, if you get near enough to a native to reach him with the cutlass, all you have got to do is to take a good swing, and with all your might hit him with the edge of it—that's all the cutlass-exercise I know, either. Now, men, settle to your oars, and pull gently to the point, and when I give you the word, lay back all you know. I hope to gain something by the surprise."

We rounded the point, and were in full view of the savages on the shore; but so intent were they on observing the proceedings on board the brig, that we arrived within two or three hundred yards of the vessel before our approach was noticed, and made known to those on her deck by yells and signals from the land.

"Now, men, give way—lay back, lay back," shouted Graham; "Murray, for God's sake keep cool and steady now, and show the metal you're made of; don't waste a shot, whatever happens."

A frightful uproar instantly arose from the brig, but in the midst of all we distinctly heard the cheers with which we were greeted by the two poor fellows who had been so hard pushed for their lives—cheers which were taken up by our boat's crew, and returned with a will.

We crossed the brig's bow at about fifty yards distance, and for the first time I could tell with certainty what kind of a job we had undertaken. Fifty or more savages, armed with lances, harpoons and spades, were on the vessel's deck—a decided hornet's nest to get into. They would have soon finished us, had we been among them. A dozen of them, at least, had swarmed into the boat; and as we came in sight of her, she pushed off, and came straight for us, some of her occupants paddling, and the rest brandishing weapons similar to those exhibited on the brig.

"Now for it, Murray," said Graham; "aim low—don't hurry—make sure of your aim, and let 'em have it. Avast pulling—hold the boat;" and a moment later he continued, "Stern, boys, stern; we can stern faster than they can paddle ahead; take your time, Murray; but *don't miss!*"

I had raised the gun to my shoulder once, but I trembled—trembled at the thought of shedding human blood, though in a just cause—a cause of absolute necessity. But I remembered the two men in the crosstrees, whose lives depended on our success, and the probable fate of their shipmates; and when I glanced along the barrels again, my hand was as steady as it is while I write this narrative.

We were about forty yards from the other boats, when I took a cool, deliberate aim at the centre of the crowd of natives, and fired; and hardly had the first heavy charge of buckshot done its work, before the second barrel was emptied with as good an aim as the first. I was only waiting an instant for the puff of smoke to clear away, so as to "make sure work," as Graham had urged.

The howls of rage and defiance from the brig and the shore were insufficient to drown the shrieks of terror and mortal anguish that arose from the crowded whale-boat. One crimson object sprang into the air and

disappeared with a splash beneath the waters of the little bay; a tall native in the bow, armed with a boat-spade, brandished his weapon for a moment after I fired the second barrel, then dropped it, swung his hands out wildly, as though seeking some support, and fell backward over the gunwale of the boat; and one—and then a second—dropped down in her bottom, while several of the survivors were vainly striving to stop the blood that gushed freely from their wounds. Sixteen buckshot, "eighty to the pound," in each barrel at forty yards—just far enough to scatter—had told heavily on their unprotected bodies. Two or three of them were frantically paddling for the brig, as I picked up the second shot-gun and cocked it.

"Hold on, Murray, hold on; don't fire that one. Load up—load up, and let 'em have it!" sung out the skipper. "We must keep our arms ready, and work coolly. Shove a dozen buckshot into this musket (handing one of them to the man next him, who passed it to me) on top of the ball, and let fly into the boat again before she reaches the brig. Quick's your play, mate, quick's your play! Never mind a wad, let her rip, let her rip!"

"Let her rip" I did, merely stopping to drop a number—how many I have no idea—of the buckshot into the gun. I heard a roar, and felt a jar, and then I picked myself out of the boat's bottom, having been kicked backwards over the bow thwart by the recoil of the overloaded musket. Looking towards the other boat, I saw that she was deserted, one wounded wretch alone being visible, lying half over her side.

I commenced to reload the big shot-gun, and was ramming down the wads on the powder, Graham at the same time loading up the discharged musket again; having cartridges for his gun, while I had but loose powder and shot, he had finished loading, and was putting on a cap, when he suddenly stopped a moment, looking towards the shore, and said:—

"Look here, Murray; I must kill that fellow. Our only chance is to get the natives gallied (frightened); I hate to do it, but I must."

Looking in the direction indicated, I saw a native swimming rapidly for the shore, the rest having probably reached the brig. Before I could look around or speak, I heard a report, and simultaneously with the sound I saw the fugitive's head droop beneath the

surface, and his hands thrash about for a few moments, and then the water was suddenly and violently agitated, and sharp back-fins seen two or three times above the waves, evidenced that the ocean cannibals—the sharks—were busy at their work. I looked at Graham.

"Don't blame me, Murray," said he; and he was ghastly pale, though cool and determined as ever; "don't blame me. It looks like murder, but it had to be done. Our lives or theirs, there is no other alternative."

"I don't blame you, Graham," said I; "but this is awful work. Those sharks—none of the savages can swim for us now, that's certain; and —"

"Boat ahoy!" came from the brig's cross-trees; "look ashore, look ashore!"

We looked ashore; and saw what was not at all calculated to reassure us. The natives were launching no less than seven good-sized canoes, capable of carrying from fifteen to thirty men each.

"Aha! here's hot work for us yet," said Graham; "steward, load up that musket; load it carefully, and make sure the powder enters the tube; a miss-fire may cost us our lives. Are you loaded, Murray?"

"All ready," said I.

"Then stand fast all, keep the boat steady, and I'll try if a bullet will do anything for us. Look sharp ashore, Murray, and see if I hit."

And as he spoke, Graham leveled a musket and fired. A native who was some distance from the water's edge sprang into the air but did not fall to the ground; he was evidently badly hurt, however, and staggered into the bushes; accompanied by the whole howling crowd.

"That was a good shot," I remarked, "and has done us good; see 'em hook it!"

"It's done us good and no mistake," said the skipper; "but I didn't aim at that fellow, at all! I fired at the ones around the canoes. But it's just as well. Load this gun, steward (handing it to him), and when you're loaded, we'll give the brig's crew a shot from the big swan-gun; that's what'll tell, if anything will. If we can drive 'em below, and I can keep those cursed canoes beached, we can get the men from the cross-trees easy enough. Let 'em have it now, Murray, right amongst that crowd near the stump of the mainmast."

Some twenty of the savages were clustered near the place indicated by Graham (as we

afterwards discovered, around a wounded native, one of the boat's crew), and having directed the men to pull a few strokes till I was at the distance I desired, the old shot-gun again gave its double roar.

The effect was all we could have wished. Three or four of the poor wretches fell, and others were wounded; but what delighted us was, that their companions, who up to this time had been on deck and along the rails, armed with the deadly whaling-gear, were so terrified at the slaughter occasioned by our fire, which they could not return, that they hastened to get out of sight. In twenty seconds not an unwounded man was to be seen.

"Crosstrees ahoy!" hailed Captain Graham; "now's your chance. Slide down the jib-stay to the boom-end, and we'll come underneath and take you off. We'll cover you with our guns till you reach the jib-boom. Now for it; bear a hand before the black devils are out again.

The imprisoned seamen needed no urging, and we pulled to within about thirty yards of the brig, ahead of her, so that we could shoot down any native who might attempt to get out on the bowsprit. But no such attempt was made; the savages were too thoroughly frightened. The sailors rode down the jib-stay to the boom, and shook the gasket free. We pulled up with the boat, and in less than twenty minutes from the time the savages on shore descried our approach—though it has taken me much longer to describe the affair—the two men were safe with their friends, for such we had surely proved ourselves.

One of the men was an Englishman, and he was unhurt. He brought with him the hatchet with which the natives had been kept at bay. The other was a Sandwich Island Kanaka, and he bore traces of rough usage; his cheek was badly cut, his left arm almost useless from a blow with a club, and his scalp laid open to the skull with a frightful wound, five or six inches in length.

"Stow yourselves aft here in the stern-sheets, men, out of the way," said Graham; "lay back with a steady stroke, my boys; don't wind yourself, for we may have a race for it yet; though I guess they've got enough of it for one morning. Anyhow, their cursed old canoes are no match for us; these fellows don't know how to make swift canoes; it's a good job they don't, too."

I had not felt any fear after I fired the

first shot—there was no time to be frightened; but I did certainly feel relieved when we got so far away from the unlucky brig that Graham told me there was no use in keeping the gun in my hands any longer.

We were not molested in any way on our return to the schooner, which we found about four miles off, working up under a light breeze. The astonishment on board as we came alongside may be imagined. They had heard nothing of the guns, and could not see the brig; and had supposed that we were driving a fine trade with the natives, as we did not return. Knowing Graham as they did, no uneasiness had been felt for our safety.

The brig was a Hobarttown whaler, the *Celia*, Captain Frederic Johnson. She had on board about two hundred barrels of sperm oil, and had run into the bay where we found her, to get fruit, anchoring at some distance from the shore. The natives had furnished them with fruit in abundance, and seemed so friendly, that the captain, against the advice of his mate and persuasion of the Kanaka, had resolved to stop all night at his anchorage.

It was a fatal resolve; for while the men were at supper the savages made an attack in great numbers, and though the brig's men fought desperately for their lives, and slew numbers of their assailants, they were overpowered and destroyed, with the exception of the two we had rescued. The Englishman was in the maintop hanging up bunches of bananas when the attack was made, and the Kanaka managed to fight his way to the rigging with a boat-hatchet, the handle of which was still stained crimson. He said he killed three men; and quite possibly he did.

After getting possession of the brig, the natives had paid out all her anchor-chain, letting the end (which was clenched around the mast where they could get at it) go out through the hawse-pipe, probably not knowing how to heave it in or unshackle it. They had then towed the brig in upon the reef, at high water, and as the tide fell she broke her back. The men had been discovered at daylight, but the savages had not troubled them during the entire day; they were very busy, however, in plundering their prize, and took all the dead bodies on shore—probably to feast on.

The wretched prisoners remained in the crosstrees a second night, suffering from

thirst, but having plenty of fruit to eat, as the rigging was thickly hung with bananas, if they had any appetite.

Some time in the night, the natives being very thick on the deck, and frequently looking up at the crosstrees, which were plainly visible in the firelight from the shore, the Kanaka fancied they were meditating an attack; and managing, despite his wounds, to ascend to the royal yard, he cut it adrift and sent it down on deck with a crash that made the savages scatter. This noise it was which had been heard by old Tom and the Tannaman.

The second morning after the capture, the natives had attempted to reach them, five of the blacks coming up the topmast rigging, the leader bringing a cutting-in spade; but the Englishman had cut the rigging at the top, and let them down by the run, by which they believed the whole number were killed. The savages had then cut away the mast; the two men sticking to their position as long as they dared, and then riding down the topgallant head-stay to the foretop, and ascending to the fore-topmast crosstrees. The natives had then commenced to cut away the foremast; and it was half cut through when the yells of the savages warned the seamen that something unusual was taking place; they did not see us until we were close to the brig's boat, being too intent watching the natives. Even when they did see us they had but little hope that we should be able to defeat the crowds of blacks; but after seeing the deadly effect of the first fire, and the evident consternation it occasioned among the islanders, they began to gather hope; though they still feared that we might trust to a hand-to-hand encounter, when destruction would have been certain.

My story is told; but I may as well say what became of the brig. We stood in for the wreck with the schooner, all the arms being on deck, and the brass gun loaded with a round shot and a small bag of big nails. No signs of life greeted us as we approached her, the mate going ahead of us in the boat, carefully sounding his way. We brought the schooner to the wind about three hundred yards from the brig; and having drawn out the nails, fired the shot at the wreck. It struck her about the covering board and passed through her galley, making a great crash; but no native appeared. Two or three shots were fired at the woods without starting anything up, and we then

hauled off shore till next morning, when we ran in again, and cannonaded the wreck till we were satisfied that the natives had left her, when we cautiously went on board. From what we saw we concluded that the savages must have cleared out soon after we had retreated with the boat; as we found seven dead bodies on her deck or below, and they would not have left them behind had they not left in a hurry.

We merely put the bodies out of our way, and commenced taking out what oil w

could. By sundown we had got one hundred and twenty barrels of it on board the *Adventure*, about all we could well get at, or well stow in the schooner. So we set the dismantled wreck on fire, and stood away to sea again. She burned brilliantly for about two hours, and then the light decreased, and finally went out in darkness. We returned to the British colonies instead of going to China; and the whole of the oil we brought in was divided among us, the *Celia's* owners declining to claim any of it.

"GOING BERRYING."

BY HARRIET MABEL SPALDING.

LONG years ago, on a golden noon,
When the ripe, red berries lay fast asleep
Down where the roses were wrapped away
In the tangled leaves of the meadow deep,
They roamed together—the maiden fair,
And he with the ringlets of sunny hair;
And their laughter rang out on the air so still,
As they went berrying over the hill.

What wonder that hands so small and brown
Would meet his own in the tangled vines!
What wonder the hours would pass so soon,
That the sky with the western sunset shines!
But what were the magic words he said,
That turned your lips and your cheeks so red;
That left the basket as empty still
As when you went berrying over the hill?

Though years have fled, and the blushing glow
Of the crimson berries has passed away,
Yet Summer comes, and her rosy hands
Bring others as bright as those to-day;
And through the bloom of the woodland ways,
With laughter and song as in other days,
The youths and maidens are roaming still
To gather strawberries over the hill.

But he, with his eyes of deepest blue,
His ringing voice and unconscious grace,
Lies low where the billows above him wave,
And the daisies cover his laughing face;
And an aged woman, with tear-filled eye,
Stands watching the happy throng go by,
And the scene is as sweet to her memory still
As when she went berrying over the hill.

Her merry eyes that were laughing then
Are dimmed with time; while the hand of care
Has silvered the locks on the aged brow,
And furrowed the cheeks that were once so fair.
Though youth's sweet visions have flown away,
And under the willows he sleeps to-day,
Yet her heart is as true and as loyal still
As when they went berrying over the hill.

SCHODACK LANDING, N. Y.

PLAIN PETER STUBBS.

BY CONSTANCE STERLING.

"**B**UT, mother, his name is enough to set any girl against him. Fancy my being Mrs. Peter Stubbs!"

And I laughed aloud as I pronounced the name I thought so hideous.

"Can he help his name?" queried mother. "It is a Bible name as well as yours, Esther."

"Stubbs a Bible name!" I exclaimed. "Well, I confess that is news to me. I'll get the Bible and look it up at once."

"You know very well that I mean the name of Peter, not Stubbs," said mother, growing just a little angry.

"I might possibly put up with the Peter, but the Stubbs is just a little too much. What were his parents thinking of when they named him? They should have given him a handsome Christian name to compensate for his being obliged to be a Stubbs all his life long. But plain Peter Stubbs! Ugh!"

"If you thought more of the farm that he owns, his horses and cattle, barns and stables, and less of his name, you would show more sense, Esther," said my sister Matilda. "I think, myself, that it would sound better if his name were Herbert or Reginald; but since it is not, and your chances for entering the blessed state of matrimony in Hooksville will be few and far between in the future, as they have been in the past, and considering our poor circumstances, I think the sooner you consent to be Mrs. Peter Stubbs, the better it will be."

"Sensible advice, as usual, Matilda," said mother, approvingly. "There is no nonsense about you. I only wish Esther had half your sense, or that Peter had offered himself to you instead of her."

"You may both talk until doomsday," I said, rather hotly, "but you will never get me to even think of marrying plain Peter Stubbs."

This ended the argument for the time being; but neither mother nor Matilda left a stone unturned to convince me how foolish I was to reject the hand and heart of plain Peter Stubbs.

The man himself was not my ideal, by any means; but still I liked Peter very much. He had been my knight ever since I

wore bib-aprons and short skirts; and though I had, figuratively speaking, trampled him under my feet on all occasions, laughed at his awkwardness, and ridiculed his name, I still liked Peter very much indeed. But liking is not loving, as I found out when one June morning, when I was eighteen, and Peter twenty-three, he proposed to marry me and make me mistress of the large, handsome farm he owned just four miles from Hooksville. I rejected him flatly, though I confess my heart did ache just a little when I saw his eyes grow sad, and a grayish shade settle on his pleasant face.

But he kept on coming to our house to see me; and now it was July, and I had just received a letter from him in which he asked me, for the second time, to become his wife. I showed it to Matilda, and that led to the argument with which I began my story.

When I went to bed that night I lay awake and thought it all over. I imagined how Susan Lake and Annie Parker would laugh at me, and recall all I had ever said about Peter Stubbs to my mind; and how they would ridicule anew his name if I accepted him; and how horrible it would be to me to hear myself called "Mrs. Peter Stubbs" wherever I went. Then I had always in my air-castles seen myself the wife of some rich, dark-eyed youth, whose voice should fall like music on my ear, whose hands should be long, slender, and marvelously white (Peter's were fat and sunburned), and who should be named Reginald de Vere, or Harold Fitz Laurence, or something else just as high-sounding and aristocratic. And how could I come down to being Mrs. Peter Stubbs? No, I wouldn't marry Peter, no matter what arguments mother and Matilda might use to convince me it was best.

It was quite true, what Matilda had said about my chances of matrimony in Hooksville. There were only about twenty eligible young men in the whole place; and these Susan Lane, Annie Parker and I used to laugh at, mimicking John Carter's squint, and David Hopper's leer, and making fun of all indiscriminately. I felt quite sure that I should never marry any one in Hooksville, or meet my ideal within its borders. Peter

Stubbs was really the finest young man we knew; and beside being well-off, was kind-hearted, and possessed of a better education than most young farmers receive. If I rejected Peter, I rejected my last chance in Hooksville; but reject him I did, and the poor fellow came to the house no more.

Mother and Matilda had little patience with me after my second refusal, and, if we were ever "scrimped" in anything, took care to tell me that if I had married Peter I could have had every wish gratified; and so often did I hear his name that I hated it more than ever, and, when I saw the owner in church, turned my head away, and smiled when I bowed to John Carter, or gave the rose in my belt to David Hopper, in spite of knowing how reproachful Peter's blue eyes grew, for he knew as well as I did that I cared not a jot for either of those sandy-haired, freckle-faced young men.

I was very glad when in September came a letter from my old grandmother in Catesville, asking me to come there and stay with her all winter. She said she was getting more feeble every day, and needed some one to care for her, as her niece, Harriet Blessinghold, was to be married in a few days and move away. Harriet was fully forty years of age, I knew; and as I read that she was about to be married, the foolish thought came up in my heart that if she, at that advanced age, could find a suitable husband in Catesville, what might not I at eighteen do?

So I went to Catesville with a very contented spirit, and grandmother gave me Harriet's old room. I was very glad to be away from home, and from the constant iteration of the name of Peter Stubbs. I sincerely hoped that in Catesville I might find my ideal, and then in triumph exhibit him to mother and Matilda, and forever extinguish all the hopes and aspirations of poor Peter Stubbs.

Mother wrote to me very seldom; Matilda, once every three weeks. Matilda's second letter after my arrival in Catesville contained the following item of news about Peter Stubbs:—

"His mother died five days ago, and I am sure I don't know what Peter is going to do now. He is all alone in that big house, with only the two servants. Annie Parker said, at the funeral, that he would have to get married now, whether he wanted to or not; and I know that either she or Susan Lake

would just jump at the chance of being Mrs. Peter Stubbs, in spite of the way they have made fun of his name. But I do hope Peter will have more sense than to marry one of those foolish, empty-headed girls."

When I laid the letter down I remained plunged in a reverie for at least fifteen minutes. I was thinking of Peter Stubbs. How he had loved his mother! I could imagine him sitting at his lonely meals, and having no one at all to welcome his coming or speed his going. I verily believe that if Peter had walked in at that moment and asked me to marry him, I should have said "Yes," so sorry did I feel for him in his loneliness and sadness.

But he didn't walk in; and the next day something happened which drove all thought of him out of my foolish brain.

I was walking down High Street late in the evening, bound on an errand for grandmother. I carried my purse in one hand, and in the other my umbrella, for it looked like rain.

"Miss," said a voice right behind me, startling me terribly, "you have lost your handkerchief."

I turned quickly to see a young man holding out a dainty hemstitched handkerchief to me, bowing profoundly as he did so.

"It is not mine," was my stammered reply.

How could my voice be fluent when looking into my own eyes were the eyes of my cherished ideal, and in my ears sounded the musical voice I had fancied, yet never before heard?

"Are you quite sure it is not yours?" questioned the soft, mellow voice very politely.

"Yes, sir, quite sure," I managed to say.

He made me another low bow, and then walked away, as if reluctant to leave my presence.

How "my heart went pit-a-pat" as I hurried on down the street to the store for which I was bound! My mind was so taken up with the image of the Adonis who had just spoken to me, that I could with difficulty remember what articles grandmother wanted.

When I left the store, laden with parcels, I found, to my dismay, that it was raining quite fast. I was hesitating what to do, for my hands were too full to permit of my raising my umbrella.

"Will you permit me to hold my umbrella

over you? I see you are quite incapacitated for holding your own," said the musical voice of my ideal; and there he was by my side, holding his large silk umbrella over me, and walking by me until we reached my grandmother's house, which was only a short distance from the store.

I spoke but little during our walk, for I felt confused and shy; but my companion made up for my silence, for before we parted I had learned that he was the son of a wealthy banker in a distant city, and was only in Catesville on business for a time.

"I am so lonely here," he said, as he held my hand at parting; "I know absolutely no one. Will you, *can* you allow me to call on you just once? I should so enjoy it. I know we are congenial spirits. You have only an old grandmother, you say, and I am sure there will be no objections made. Let us dispense with the empty form called an introduction."

I blushingly gave him permission to call, feeling very guilty as I did so, and he put in my hand his card, on which I read the name of "Florentine De Veign."

"I am partly French," he said, as he saw me read his name.

"Oh, I knew that," I replied. "Your black hair and eyes and—and"—I stammered, ran in the house and shut the door after me.

I did not tell my grandmother of my adventure, of course. I knew she would not approve of my giving permission to a total stranger to call. I was in a fever of impatience all the next day, and at night dressed myself in my best, and sat in the parlor with my crochet. At eight o'clock the bell rang, and he came. Grandmother had gone to bed, and knew nothing of it.

We spent a delightful evening,—at least it was delightful to me. And the next evening he came again. I then told grandmother that I had met Mr. De Veign when I was "out," and she asked no more questions; for she understood that I meant when I had been invited out to some neighbor's. She thought little of his coming to see me so often, being more taken up with her rheumatism than with my visitors. She kept her room almost all the time, and was unaware how frequently my dark-eyed ideal called on me.

When I had known him three weeks he offered himself to me. He pleaded as an excuse for this haste that he must return to

his home, having been repeatedly summoned thence by his father. I was so infatuated with him that I said at once that I would marry him.

I told grandmother of our engagement; and Florentine had an interview with the old lady, promising to bring her letters which would show her who and what he was, and what an excellent match it would be for me.

I was very proud to be able to write to mother and Matilda about my engagement. I had been hardly ten weeks in Catesville, and was already engaged to the handsome son of a wealthy banker. "Isn't it better to be the wife of Florentine De Veign, than of your plain Peter Stubbs?" I asked; and Matilda wrote back that she was very glad I was so well satisfied, and that Annie Parker had just married David Hopper, and Susan Lake was engaged to John Carter.

"They will envy me," I thought, "when they see my handsome, raven-haired Florentine. How can they marry those freckle-faced young men? To think I ever thought or debated marrying Peter Stubbs!"

A couple of days later Florentine and I were in the parlor. He was telling me that he must return the next evening to his father, but that as soon as he had arranged for our marriage he would come back to Catesville and take me home to my mother and sister, and make their acquaintance. While he talked he was pulling at my watch-chain; all at once a link broke in it.

He immediately unfastened both watch and chain.

"I will take this and get it mended for you," he said, "I am so sorry I broke it. And, Esther, will you let me have your initials engraved on the watch? Let me have 'E. De V.' put on, dear?" and he smiled.

I was too infatuated with the man to protest against it, and he rose to go in a few minutes.

"Esther," he said, as he kissed me good-night, "I dislike to ask a favor of you, love, but could you let me have fifty dollars? I expected a check from father to-day, but it did not come. If it comes to-morrow I can pay you back before I leave for home, and if not, I will send it to you in my first letter. I actually need the money, or I should not ask for it, and such matters are nothing between such congenial souls as we are, love."

"Don't mention it, Florentine," I begged. "I can lend it to you, and you can pay me back at any time."

I ran up-stairs to my room to get the money. I had just sixty dollars, the savings of the ten weeks I had been with grandmother. She was very generous to me, and I had no occasion to spend my money, so was saving it for my wedding *trousseau*. How glad I was that I could oblige my beloved Florentine in anything!

He kissed me ardently as I gave him the money, and then, promising to be up early the next day to see me, he left the house.

But though I waited impatiently all the next day, my ideal lover did not make his appearance. Nor did he come the next day or the day after. Then I became uneasy, and sent the servant to inquire for him at the boarding-house where he had been staying. She returned with the information that Mr. De Veign had left there owing a heavy board-bill.

Well, it was the last I heard from my ideal. I never saw him again, nor did I ever see either my watch or money again. Three weeks later a gentleman in Catesville told me that he had been discovered to be a regular "black-leg" and swindler, and went from town to town making love to young girls and possessing himself of watches and trinkets on the plea of getting their initials engraved on them.

For six weeks longer I stayed with grandmother, hiding my mortification as well as I might, and then I made up my mind to return home. I did not write to either mother or Matilda that I was coming, but set off one February day for Hooksville. As I rode along in the cars my mind was full of troubles, and I could not help contrasting plain Peter Stubbs with the elegant Florentine, much to the latter's disadvantage. I felt weary and heart-sick, and wondered if people in Hooksville would stare at me, and how Peter Stubbs would treat me? Would he love me now? I thought of Peter until I persuaded myself that I really loved him dearly; and, after all, his name wasn't so very bad. There were many worse names than that of Peter Stubbs.

A chill came over me as the train moved on. Had Peter's love for me grown cold? Had his vows of everlasting love been forgotten? Matilda had never mentioned his name in her letters since she had written of the death of his mother.

The first familiar face I saw in Hooksville was that of Peter Stubbs. He was standing on the platform at the railway station. He seemed glad to see me, and said he had his buggy and horses near by, and would drive me to my mother's house.

As the distance to our cottage was over a mile, I was only too glad to accept his kind offer, and we were soon driving along the hard, frozen road. I did not object at all to being tucked up in buffalo robes by the side of my quondam lover, and a thrill passed through my heart as I reflected that I had refused the privilege of riding behind this handsome span forever. Perhaps I could undo the mischief, and Peter was very attentive now, and I felt sure he had not ceased to care for me. Mother and Matilda would not taunt me with my engagement to a swindler if I could introduce Peter to them as my future husband.

"You have not forgotten the nice rides we used to take last summer, Peter?" I said rather nervously.

"No, Esther. We used to have some pleasant times," he replied.

"You always were a dear friend, and a good one, Peter," I ventured.

"Yet not dear enough for a husband, Esther? Well, well, all that is in the past, Esther. I don't mind it now."

"Times a'n't now as they used to was been, Folks don't do now as they used to did then,"

he quoted presently, turning his laughing blue eyes on me.

"Of course Matilda has told you the whole story," he said, after a short silence.

"What story?" I asked.

"Do you not know that Matilda and I are to be married next week?" he asked in surprise. "Why, I thought to be sure she had told you all about it. It is so, anyhow. I think she will make me a good wife. After you went away I began to call on her occasionally, and, with you away, had a good opportunity to study her character, and from respecting and esteeming her I soon grew to love her dearly. I was in doubt whether she would have me, since I had offered myself to you, her own sister, but she said she didn't care for that at all. I've had three of the rooms at the farm refurnished expressly for her, and I know I shall be comfortable and happy when I am married at last."

I was Matilda's only bridesmaid. Peter looked proud and happy, and almost handsome, and I couldn't help a sigh escaping

my lips as I thought of how I had thrown aside as worthless his generous and noble heart.

Years have gone by since then, and no other lover has come to woo. It was as Matilda said; there were few matrimo-

nial chances in Hooksville. Mother and I live alone in our little cottage, but pay frequent visits to the farm; and of all the men I know, the one I respect and esteem most highly is my sister Matilda's husband, plain Peter Stubbs.

A MID-OCEAN EPISODE.

BY TOM TOWNSEND.

CHAPTER I.

THE steamer had just left her dock, and as the ringing shouts of the motley assemblage on the wharf grew fainter, and their forms gradually dwindled into an indistinct black mass, Ralph Fielding gave himself up to the pleasing occupation of inspecting and criticising the faces of those around him.

On the one hand his keen eyes beheld faces saddened by the recent parting; others all aglow with eager anticipation of the coming sights of the Old World. Here might you see every type of humanity: the stout, complacent matron, with her shrinking, blushing daughter, and the inevitable meek and submissive husband; the erect and florid Wall Street magnate; the bowed form of the wasted invalid, looking his last on the land of his birth; and, perchance, some foreign notability returning homeward with, let us hope, enlarged and altered views of the land of the great Republic.

A thorough Yankee was Ralph, rendered somewhat cynical, perhaps, by his four years at Yale, but inclined to take life easily on the whole, and to let the future take care of itself. He had that happy faculty of inspiring your full and instant confidence, and made you feel instinctively that he was one who could understand and sympathize with your unspoken thoughts. As he stood gazing thoughtfully on the fast-receding land, a hand was laid upon his arm, and turning, he found himself confronted—no, not by a detective, dear reader; we are dealing with no bank-defaulter to-day—by a young girl.

"Excuse me," she began, in a hesitating, irresolute tone; "may I speak with you for a moment?"

Something, he knew not what, in the

girl's half-childish, yet dignified bearing induced Ralph to follow her without hesitation to that most delightful of retreats, in the shadow and under the warm protection of the huge smokestack, though he was mute from wonder. The girl motioned him to a seat with an imperious little nod, as though she were a powerful princess, and Ralph her lowly menial, whose sole object in life was to minister to her slightest caprice. She looked him calmly in the face for a short time, while Ralph, for the moment utterly confused, could do nothing but return her gaze in a half-dazed manner. At length she spoke, this time in a hard, metallic voice:—

"Evidently you do not remember me, and I shall have to introduce myself. I am Flossie St. Clair." Then, observing Ralph's blank look of astonishment, she gave a low laugh and exclaimed, "Why, Cousin John! is it possible you have forgotten me so completely?"

Here was a pretty fix. Ralph turned hot and cold in the same moment. Should he conceal his identity, and spare the young girl a painful embarrassment? or should he adopt the more honorable course, and try to show her the situation in its true light? With the usual wisdom of the sterner sex, Ralph determined on the former course, and forthwith took a deep plunge into the ever attractive sea of folly.

"Forgotten you, Flossie? Of course I have not! How stupid in me not to recognize you! But how you have changed!"

"Changed, indeed, sir," she said, with a pretty little air of injured vanity; "and it was only the last time we were together at Aunt Clara's that you told me I could never change in your eyes."

"Ah! I should have said, changed for the better," replied Ralph, laboring under the

impression that he was paying his cousin a most flattering compliment.

"Really! how wicked I must have been then! But truly, now, didn't we have the most delightful times at Aunt Clara's that summer? And oh! do you remember that too, *too* lovely drive we had together, and how the burglars chased us, and how"—

"Yes, indeed; perfectly!" replied Ralph, wishing most fervently that his fair interrogator were at the bottom of the sea.

"Well, you needn't be so cross about it. By the by, how is Aunt Clara now? As sour as ever?"

"Oh, no! she is quite amiable since you went away; that is—I mean"—

"Oh, don't apologize! I'm sure I don't care if you don't," gushed his amiable tormentor, sweetly. "But sit down here, and tell me all about this last prank of Charlie's. They all said that you were the only person who knew anything about it."

"Well," began Ralph, knocking over a convenient camp-stool, and very carefully picking it up again, so as to gain time, "you see Charlie never did like Yale very well, and a—a"—

"Charlie like Yale!" broke in the girl, impatiently. "Why, what does she know about it, I'd like to know?"

"*She?*" queried Ralph, feeling that he was standing on pretty thin ice.

"Yes, she. Who on earth are you talking about?"

"Why, a—a—Charlie—that is—yes, to be sure, Charlie."

"Well, if Charlotte could hear you talk, I think she would be more surprised than I am," returned his companion, with a decision born of conviction.

Ralph was fairly squelched by this last shot, and looked wildly about him for some means of escape. It appeared in the shape of an elderly gentleman, who came hastily up, eyeing Ralph curiously as he approached, and taking the lady's arm, inquired if she would not go to her stateroom. She smiled slightly, and turning abruptly on her heel, went quietly away, not deigning our here a word or gesture of farewell. The latter stood rooted to the spot in utter bewilderment, half-doubting, indeed, the actual reality of the situation; but before he could collect his scattered wits once more, the gentleman returned alone, and seated himself at his side.

"My dear sir," he began, "this has been

a most unfortunate occurrence, and one which I deeply regret. I need hardly tell you what you must already suspect, that the young lady whom I have just left is insane."

Ralph gave an involuntary start. "Insane!" he ejaculated.

"Insane," returned his companion, sadly. "My daughter is at times entirely rational, but at uncertain intervals this mysterious malady returns. As a last resort I am taking her to the south of France, in hopes that the change of climate and surroundings may possibly effect a cure. Her maid is constantly with her, but in the excitement and confusion of the departure, they were separated, and I was unable to find her till now. I trust you will pardon me the painful embarrassment which you have suffered, and implore you to remain silent on that which has passed. And now, Mr."—

"Fielding," replied Ralph, mechanically.

"And now, Mr. Fielding," resumed his companion, "I will bid you good-evening, hoping to meet you more leisurely tomorrow, provided you are as good a sailor as I."

Ralph raised his hat, and then went slowly and thoughtfully to his stateroom, feeling the pressure of a great weight upon his heart.

CHAPTER II.

THE midday sun shone brightly on the morrow, throwing a dazzling sheen of silver upon the fretful blue waters; and the huge waves seemed to lift caressingly and bear along with them the throbbing vessel. All nature seemed supremely joyful on that day, and all things to accord in perfect harmony. Old Father Neptune had donned his smoothest robe, and the passengers were out in force, some reclining in steamer-chairs, others pacing to and fro. That gentleman of the white vest and frosty mustache, so said the gossips, was Lord Tracy Parmenter, returning from a successful campaign in New York society. This last fact was attested by the presence of his charming bride, who, it may be incidentally observed, looked exceedingly homesick and disconsolate. That one by his side, with the general air of destruction and prosperity, was no other than the Hon. William O'Toole, proprietor of the New York skating-rink. These wonderful beings were

treated with respectful veneration by shoddy Americans, and with mild condescension by less susceptible Englishmen.

Near by, surrounded by a group of her satellites, posed the pride and delight of New York, Miss Violet Willowblossom, the famous actress, on her way to fulfil an engagement in London.

"Ah there, Jim!" quoth the fair Violet, with that bewitching *abandon* and playfulness that had captured the hearts of so many stalwart New Yorkers. "Come here, you lazy fellow, and help me up. No, not you, Hamlet." The faithful Jim handed her gingerly down the saloon steps, and presently the breezes wafted over the waters snatches of that beautiful song:—

"If you can't get in by the golden gate,
Climb over the garden wall."

As Ralph slowly paced the deck, he became acutely conscious of the presence of a pair of bright eyes not far away, and started slightly as he recognized Mr. St. Clair and his daughter sitting at a short distance from him. He turned quickly away, and taking refuge behind the wheel-house in the stern, looked back with dreamy eyes upon the long, foaming wake of the vessel's path. Since yesterday's strange experience, the young girl's image had haunted his thoughts continually, and refused to be banished from his mind. His heart was moved with a feeling of the deepest pity for the poor girl with whom he had so thoughtlessly conversed, and he dreaded the possibility of another meeting.

A voice at his elbow broke in upon his reverie; and he returned Mr. St. Clair's hearty greeting with some constraint, which, however, was soon dispelled by the latter's cordial manner. The two gentlemen, in the course of their conversation, found that many of their New York acquaintances were identical; and this fact, coupled with Ralph's frank and engaging bearing, formed an easy passport to Mr. St. Clair's heart. Both, by tacit consent, avoided the topic which was uppermost in the mind of each. On the following day, however, after a few moments of casual conversation, Mr. St. Clair, struck by the manifest sympathy in the young man's face, broached the subject nearest his heart.

"Mr. Fielding," said he, "it may surprise you to know that to-day my daughter's mind is perfectly balanced and clear, and is

likely to continue so for a time. Under the circumstances, trusting you as I do, I should be happy to have you meet her in her true character. She will not recognize you, as she lives in two different worlds of thought and action."

Ralph silently acquiesced, and followed him to his daughter's side. She received him with all the ease and grace of a well-bred lady, though not a shadow of recognition shone from her clear brown eyes. Ralph took care that the conversation should be restricted to purely technical subjects, and, to his surprise, found the young girl well versed in music, art, and modern languages. She spoke of the old masters with loving appreciation, and as she proceeded, Ralph, who was an ardent disciple of Ruskin, felt his heart thrill with a sympathetic response.

When, shortly after, she withdrew to her stateroom, it would have been difficult to analyze the conflicting emotions aroused in Ralph's heart. Could it be that this graceful, intelligent girl, combining in her nature so much of tact and loveliness, must be overshadowed all her days by this terrible malady? Why should so dire a destiny pick out so tender a victim?

On the morrow, when Miss St. Clair had settled herself comfortably in her sea-chair for the day, Ralph hastened to resume an acquaintance which was at once tragic and hopeless. With unremitting attention he sought to anticipate her every wish, and the friendship between them was daily cemented and strengthened. The strange affair was assuming a new and unexpected aspect, and already he felt himself strangely drawn towards her, though inwardly conscious that the end must soon come. Those were days that he will never forget. The wind blew gently from the west, the vessel swept smoothly on her way, and the father's anxious face began to take on a look of hope.

And now the voyage was drawing to an end. Two days more, said the captain, and the passengers, tired of their cramped quarters, might stretch their limbs on the verdure-clad shores of Ireland. On the morning of the eighth day, as Ralph made his way to his seat in the dining-saloon, he looked, as usual, for the familiar form of Mr. St. Clair, and started with a dread presentiment of evil as he perceived his seat unoccupied. Hastily gulping down a cup of strong coffee, he rose to depart, but was

arrested by a voice at his side. One look at the father's haggard face, and Ralph knew the dreaded change had come. Neither spoke, and Ralph could only wring the outstretched hand of his friend in silent but heartfelt sympathy.

The day, hitherto delightful, seemed intolerably long, and he trod the deck for hours, until his feet fairly ached. Slowly night came on. The wind was rising, and moaning dismally through the rigging; the white caps on the waves looked angry, and nature herself seemed to Ralph full of dark forebodings. He threw himself upon his berth, vainly seeking oblivion in slumber; but toward morning, filled with a vague uneasiness, he rose, and hurried up on deck.

The wind had increased, and was blowing violently, while the ship ploughed gallantly through the black waters, righting herself occasionally, as the wind lessened for a moment. Ralph cautiously made his way to his favorite place in the stern, and gave himself over to the mystic influence of the

night. The creamy, curling waves seemed to beckon him downward to their soft embrace, and almost involuntarily he leaned far out over the railing.

But hark! what was that? Surely, he had heard a faint cry borne on the wings of the wind; and almost before the thought had shaped itself in his mind, a dark object, distinctly outlined in the clear moonlight, swept rapidly past him, and was lost in the gloom. Once again a loud cry rang out above the angry roar of the wind and the tumult of the waves, and then—all was still.

Two days later the London papers contained the following dispatch:—

“QUEENSTOWN, Monday.

“The steamer *Servia* arrived here this morning, and having landed all mails and some passengers, proceeded to Liverpool immediately. The *Servia* reports the loss of one passenger, a lady, who is thought to have thrown herself overboard while suffering from temporary insanity.”

A PAIR OF IMPOSTORS.

BY MATTIE WINFIELD TORREY.

“IT can't be done!” said I, in a very decided tone.

“It *must* be done!” said Nell, just as firmly.

“But,” I urged, “it's an impossibility, and you can't *expect* to effect impossible things.”

“You'll see that I shall do this, nevertheless,” replied Nellie, with the look which always came into her eyes whenever she had fully decided upon a line of conduct more than usually difficult.

“Please enlighten me,” I requested, lying back on the sofa, and looking at Nell through half-closed eyes. The day was fearfully hot, and I was too languid for argument, and as Nell always managed in the end to convince me that her way was the only right way, it mattered very little whether I gave in at the start, or after a prolonged encounter of words.

“You see,” explained she, drawing up a chair and sitting before me, with a face of the gravest consideration, “it's a settled thing that we can't stay here through this intolerable hot weather. You've not been

fit for anything the past week. Oh, you needn't deny it! I've watched you;” with a wise little nod, as I made a gesture of dissent. “And I'm fairly tired out—scarcely sufficient energy remaining to do my back hair; and as for crimps”—Nell heaved a sigh and pointed despairingly to the soft, fluffy mass, depending over her eyebrows.

“So, as I said before, it's settled that we go *somewhere*, and now, the only question is, where shall it be?”

“Oh!” said I, “is that all? I confess I had thought there was another small question with respect to funds; but since that seems to have retired completely out of sight, why, I vote for the Yosemite without further loss of time.”

Nell didn't heed me, but seating herself at our little table she began to make rapid calculations upon a piece of paper. Nell is good at figures. She is bookkeeper at Seal and Newton's, the largest book and stationery store in Gotham. My own head is a very poor one for figures, so I depend upon Nellie for whatever arithmetical calculations I may now and then have.

"Now, Lou," said she, "please pay attention. Here I have it all in black and white. The figures speak for themselves. If we can get board at some farmhouse up the river, at any reasonable rate—say fifteen dollars a week for the pair of us"—

"Oh, but we can't," I hastened to say.

"We can do what others have done, I suppose," said Nell, sternly. "Mary Marcy was telling me to-day of a place where she and her sister boarded last summer for that. Now we've a hundred dollars between us, and I'm inclined to believe we shall spend our vacation just as happily upon the sum as though it were five times as large."

I sighed and shook my head; but the result was Nell set to work packing, while I admired the energy with which she directed all her movements. It isn't half so fatiguing to witness the packing of a trunk as it is to do the work yourself! I used to pack, that is to say, I pitched the "things" in and turned the key, devoutly hoping the confusion within would arrange itself into some kind of order before the journey came to an end. That was before Nellie and I united our fortunes. Now she turned up her nose at the mere mention of such a thing, and, as in the present case, I confine my duties to the simple act of looking on.

"I declare," said I to Nell, as we stepped on board of the many steamers which, about these days, were employed in bearing disgusted Gothamities away into the mysterious regions of which Diedrich Knickerbocker so learnedly discourses, "I feel as if we were setting out in search of adventure. I think I can sympathize with Don Quixote, or any other of those old worthies, who went about seeking their fortunes in all sorts of marvelous and unheard-of ways."

"Who knows," replied Nellie, with a laugh, and mysterious look as she arranged a couple of seats on the shady side of the boat, "who knows what good fortune may be awaiting us at the end of this journey? I know that dear Charles Lamb—bless him! how I'd like to have known that man!—says, 'It is best not to think too much of pleasant possibilities, in order that we may not be out of humor with present insipids'; but for my part, I think it is much nicer to be always looking out for something pleasant to take place. Are you entirely comfortable there?"

Comfortable! I should think so! The first cool breeze I had felt fanning my cheek. The boat was gliding swiftly

through the water which sparkled and leaped with many a pleasant gurgle and dash, as our boat cleft its way through the clear surface. A confused murmur of voices fell on our ear.

"Nell," said I, "this adventure begins *splendidly*, like a veritable fairy tale, in fact. How it will end remains to be seen."

"Never mind," replied she, "let us enjoy the opening chapter, any way. I have a presentiment that the *finale* will not disgrace the commencement."

The scenery grew more beautiful as we advanced and left the city behind us. The lovely villas dotting the banks, grew more numerous and elegant; green fields and cool woodland shadows ran down to the precipitous shores. Here and there we made a stop at the wharf of some pretty little suburban city, or village, and then away again northward. By and by the mountains frowned upon us and lifted their verdure-crowned summits high aloft, while their shadows fell at our very feet. A constant succession of the most charming views, any one of which if transferred to canvas would make the fortune of a painter, brought us at length to a quiet nook among the hills where, without any warning, the boat drew up beside a grass-covered dock which looked as if very little business was ever transacted there, and began to unload a pile of boxes and barrels. It looked so very Rip Van Winkleish that we fell in love with the place instantly.

"Dear me!" I sighed, "couldn't we just step on shore for a moment? I am sure I should sleep better to-night if I could but touch the soil of this dreamy place."

So we wandered down to the lower deck, and as everybody seemed busy and the boat showed no inclination to glide away, having to all appearance caught the dreamy influence which hung about the little hamlet, we stepped across to the shore with the intention of returning immediately.

But no sooner had our feet touched the ground than a man in the most gorgeous of liveries advanced, hat in hand, and with the politest of bows, and a flourish that would have done honor to Mr. Turveydrop in his palmiest days, signified his readiness to conduct us to the carriage, which he assured us was waiting our pleasure.

"Madam expects you," continued he, with the blandest of smiles and another salaam. "If mademoiselle will but have the goodness to hand me the checks, the

trunks shall be discovered and all will be right."

I think I was so far lost in wonder as to have completely parted company with my presence of mind. Nell, who never was surprised at anything, declared afterward, that I would have made a splendid statue of Amazement.

"My gracious!" said she, "who would have thought of finding such a lovely carriage awaiting us? Isn't it Cinderella's coach, do you think, Lou? and will it turn into a great yellow pumpkin, by and by? And those bays! Did our fairy god-mother create them with one touch of her wand?"

"Nell," cried I, recovering breath and a slight gleam of common sense, as the carriage bowled up the lovely road which wound away toward the green uplands; "we're in for it now, you may depend. This is no end of a scrape, and how we are to extricate ourselves is more than I can tell. How do we know where this man is taking us?"

"Nonsense! Don't worry! Of course there's a mistake somewhere, but it isn't our business to correct it. We were plainly told that this lovely satin-lined Clarence had been sent to meet us, and it would have been outraging all the proprieties had we refused the offered civility. We shall find out where we are going soon enough; meanwhile let us enjoy the delusion that we are really expected at one of these elegant villas, and that our kind hostess, that is to be, has sent her carriage for us."

The spirited horses pranced and tossed their manes, the glittering equipage swept on, and Nell and I rode in state through the charming country roads. It was near the close of day. On the left arose a range of mountains, blue and misty in the far distance; on the right the river gleamed here and there through the trees.

On through the dewy stillness we rode, nor paused until a huge iron gate barred our further progress. As if by magic the gate opened and we rolled through, and found ourselves upon a broad graveled road running between rows of grand old trees, evidently the approach to country-seat.

"Now," said Nell, "I feel as if the denouement were approaching. Leave all to me, and whatever you do don't make a scene."

The carriage drew up in front of a stately mansion.

The gorgeous coachman threw open the door, we were helped out, and mounting a flight of marble steps, were met at the door by a smiling maid in a smart white cap, and such a coquettish little apron as none but a French maid can wear.

"Would the young demoiselles follow her to their rooms? Everything was prepared and the trunks should follow."

Mechanically we walked on after our brisk conductress. Instead of getting out of our scrape we were getting more and more involved.

The apartment in which we were conducted was handsomely furnished. Refusing all offers of help from the maid, Nell turned the key after her and stood confronting me.

"Nell," I groaned, "how is this to end?"

"Goodness knows," replied the daring girl; "but being in for it now, I'm bound to see it through. Let's make ourselves presentable, for who knows but madam herself—whoever she may be—may take a fancy to look in upon us before long?" And she proceeded to make her toilet. I followed suit, but with a very grave face, and a sad foreboding at my heart. Hardly had we finished dressing when there came a knock at the door.

"Now for it!" whispered Nell. "Keep up your courage, Lou, and let's get out of it with flying colors, if such a thing be possible."

It proved to be madam's housekeeper, who came to inform us that madam herself was seriously indisposed—a sudden seizure of some kind—so she would be forced to forego the pleasure of seeing us that night, but as dinner was waiting, would we have the goodness to follow her to the grand *salon* and partake of the meal?

We were hungry—that we understood—so we stole a glance at each other, took courage, and—accepted the invitation.

"They couldn't treat us better if we were royal princesses," whispered Nellie.

The *salon* was ablaze with light, the table glittered with silver and cut glass; there were flowers in abundance, and everything gave evidence of great wealth and excellent taste. Servants stationed themselves behind our chairs, ready to obey the slightest word. That madam had a very superior cook we soon discovered; the dishes were splendidly served.

"Well," said Nell, "madam sets a good table; I'll say that for her, anyway. We dined sumptuously."

I was examining the fastening of our door.

"Yes, lock it," ordered Nell. "'Tisn't likely we shall be disturbed again to-night."

I was certain I shouldn't sleep a wink; nevertheless, I *did* fall so sound asleep that Nellie had hard work to awaken me the next morning.

"Oh!" said I, rousing up finally; "then it isn't all a dream!"

"Well, I should hope not!" cried the dumbless girl. "Lou, I've been looking out of the windows, and it's a grand old place. I hope madam will be pleased to continue her patronage, for I've taken a great fancy to her house and grounds."

There were sounds of life through the house, and Nell unclosed the door to look out up and down the hall. A moment afterward I heard her exclaim, "O Mr. Lester!" and then skip away down the long hall.

In a few moments she came back laughing.

"O Lou," she cried, "I can read you the riddle now. We are a couple of impostors, and have been sailing under false colors ever since we stepped off the boat last night." Then, seeing my puzzled look, she explained:—

"It is very simple, my dear. Madam was expecting a couple of nieces. They did not come and we did, and have unconsciously appropriated the reception intended for them. Mr. Lester—Sue Lester's brother, you know—happens to be madam's lawyer, and has promised to explain to the dear creature that we were tricked into this scrape, and he is certain she will see the joke and forgive us."

When summoned to madam's presence we felt like a pair of naughty schoolgirls going to be reprimanded; but madam was gracious, and laughed at our escapade. She was a vivacious little French woman of an uncertain age, and made so many gestures while talking we half felt as if we were witnessing a pantomime. We liked her immensely.

"So my coachman ran off with you! Oh, the bad Jacques! But see; here I have a telegram, and my nieces are coming this morning. Nina and Annette Delevan"—

"Nina and Annette!" cried Nell. "Ah, madam! I know them. They are at Mrs. Morelle's, just across the way from my own place of business."

"Ah!" said madam, delighted with the information; "then thou knowest two good girls. They have high spirits, which will not allow them to remain idle and accept of a home with me, which I should be glad to give them."

In fine, she would not allow us to depart, but settled it that we were to remain and greet her young relatives. And this time there was no mistake; the carriage contained the right occupants.

I knew the girls slightly, but the mirth which was excited when our presence was explained made us all acquainted. Madam, who seemed to enjoy the joke hugely, now urged us to remain with them. Nina and Annette added their importunities, and we found it impossible to get away.

"Well," said Nell, "we are in luck, and I don't see why we should quarrel with destiny. Let's take the good things as they come." And we enjoyed every day of our vacation, and came away with sincere regret, and a genuine feeling of love and admiration for our kind hostess.

A REVERIE.

BY F. K. PENN.

A LONE in the quiet gloaming,
My work for the day all done,
I watch the lights of the heaven
Take their places one by one.

So silent and calm the evening,
So hushed the noise of the day,
As if the very twilight
Were whispering "Let us pray."

The soft sweet note of the wood-thrush,
Coming up from yonder glen,
I fancy the voice of an angel
Sweetly responding "Amen."

The far-off cry of the night bird,
The plaint of the meadow stream,
Meet sounds of the solemn hymnal
That closes the day's last beam.

The scent of the clover and elder
And sweeter smell of the hay,
As balm to my tired spirit,
This breath of the dying day.

All, all in unison blending,
Like songs of the angels blest,
They soothe my world-weary longings,
And hush all my cares to rest.

AMOS CHAPLINE'S RUSE.

BY JAMES DABNEY.

THOSE who have ever visited the city of Wheeling, the capital of the State of West Virginia, have not failed to be impressed with the romantic beauty of the surrounding scenery, a romance fully in keeping with the wild and adventurous character of its history. It is hard to realize that this fine city has grown up in the last half century, and that fifty years ago the place contained scarcely half a dozen log cabins; and that where now stands the handsome depot of the great railroad which connects the Ohio River with the Chesapeake Bay, then stood the rough fort which alone saved the settlers from the rifle or knife of the savage. The position of Fort Henry was very strong, as it was located at the intersection of Wheeling Creek with the Ohio River, and completely commanded every approach to it. This fort was one of the few frontier posts which never fell into the hands of the savages, and, as it was the object of their particular hatred from this fact, it was called upon to withstand many attacks. Especially is the siege which was conducted by the notorious renegade, Simon Girty, famous in the annals of border warfare.

Among the settlers who first built their cabins at Wheeling was a young man named Amos Chapline. He came from the eastern part of the Union, no one knew exactly what part, and declared that he meant to stay in the new settlement as long as he could keep his scalp on his head. He had left a sweetheart behind him in the East, he said, and as soon as he could succeed in securing a home of his own he was going back after her. His free and easy manner and his generosity made him many friends, and it was not long before he was one of the most popular men in the whole settlement. Whenever a scouting party was sent out, Amos Chapline was sure to be one of the number, and by the time he had been a year in the West he had won the reputation of being one of the most accomplished and cautious woodsmen on the Ohio. He seemed to catch Indian manners and habits by intuition, and to the surprise of all his friends, could speak the dialects of the various tribes of the Upper Ohio with the fluency

of a red man. The result was that at the expiration of his second year in the West, Mr. Chapline was given a post in the garrison of Fort Henry next in rank to the commander of the post.

About this time the Indians became unusually troublesome, and it was determined to send an expedition against them. The command of the party, some forty in number, was given to Amos Chapline, and the men were provided with everything necessary to a thirty days' campaign. They left the fort in high spirits, and crossing the creek moved down the river towards Grave Creek, intending, if necessary, to move down as low as the Kanawha, where the Shawnees had some important towns. Chapline was a very cautious leader, and he kept his men well in hand, never relaxing the rigid discipline so necessary to the success of such an expedition. Some of the men were disposed at first to murmur at what they regarded as unnecessary strictness, but Amos was firm, and as he was always willing to perform what he required of his men, he soon induced them to yield a cheerful and ready submission to his will.

The party passed Grave Creek without meeting with anything of an adventurous nature, but the next day one of the men shot an Indian whom he had caught lurking in the woods, as if watching them. The savage was at once recognized as a Shawnee, and from the fantastic manner in which he was painted it was evident that he was but the forerunner or scout of a large war party which could not be very far distant. Amos now determined to advance slowly and with the utmost caution.

That night his fears were realized, and he found himself immediately in front of a large number of Indians. They had built fires and had gone into camp for the night, and thus far had not the remotest idea of the presence of the whites. Still it was necessary to act with caution, for the snapping of a twig, or the rustle of a branch might give warning to the red men of the proximity of their foes. Amos at first determined to attack the savages, but a closer examination showed him that they were too numerous for such a venture to be

successful. The best thing he could do would be to withdraw at once and try to reach Fort Henry as soon as possible, and give the alarm, for he had no doubt that the fort was the destination of the dusky army. But when he came to attempt it, he found withdrawing a much more difficult task than he had supposed; and finally, in order to make sure of a safe retreat, he divided his men into synods of five, with orders to make their way back to the settlement by different routes and with all speed. As for himself, he determined to gain more accurate information of the numbers and plans of the savages before he set out on his return.

He watched his men until the last of them had moved off with noiseless steps into the darkness, and then carefully examining his rifle to make sure that it was in readiness for instant use, and loosening his hunting-knife, he set out with his face towards the camp of the savages. Long experience, added to an unusual keenness of vision, had given him the power of discerning objects by night as plainly as by day, and he moved along now, rapidly but silently, scanning the dim woods with strained eyes. Every moment brought him nearer to the Indian camp, and increased his danger of stumbling across some of their scouts or sentinels. Fortune favored him, however, and he succeeded in reaching the very verge of the camp without being discovered.

Four large fires had been built, and around these were collected a number of redskins, amounting, as near as he could estimate them, to about three hundred. They were hideously decked out with war-paint and feathers, and were evidently prepared for a grand campaign. They were talking merrily over some subject, and frequently would burst into shouts of exultant laughter. In order to overhear their talk, the young man resolved to get up closer to them, and after considerable exertion he managed to pass into the camp unobserved, and to climb into a large tree, the branches of which were not more than fifty feet from one of the fires.

As he settled himself noiselessly among the boughs, he thought for the first time of his foolishness in venturing so completely into the midst of the Indians, and as he looked down he could not help asking himself how he should get away. The least sound might betray him now, and he knew that if he once fell into the hands of those below him he could expect no mercy. He

had been too dangerous to them to hope they would spare him. He listened to the talk of the savages, and then decided upon his plan of action, which was as singular as it was successful.

Carefully surveying the scene below he crawled noiselessly out among the thick branches of a part of the tree which extended near to one of the fires. Among his accomplishments was the gift of ventriloquism, and this he now determined to use. Throwing his voice down among the blazing fagots, he startled the Indians by asking, in a loud tone, why they dared to venture out upon such an expedition. The warriors started to their feet in astonishment, and Amos lay very still in the tree. Then began a confused jabber of tongues, and the dusky group gathered around the fire, pointing to it and gesticulating energetically. At last a circle was formed, and the chief stepped out alone, preparatory to addressing them. As he opened his lips Amos threw his voice into the chieftain's mouth and uttered a prolonged howl. The savage sprang back in dismay, and then the young man, with a remarkable facility, changed the voice from one painted brave to another, causing them to utter noises like cats and dogs, and all manner of insulting speeches. The medicine man was called by the affrighted heathen, but before he could speak Amos shouted out, in good Shawnee, to return home at once; that the curse of the Great Spirit was upon the expedition. Then he made such a buzzing noise about the ears of the conjurer that the man gave a yell of fear, and starting off at full speed, plunged into the depths of the forest. The remainder of the band hesitated, but a fresh imprecation from the ventriloquist decided them, and they fled in dismay.

As soon as they were gone Amos Chapline descended from the tree, and after watching about until daylight to satisfy himself that the Indians had really given up their undertaking, started back for Wheeling. He reached the settlement in due time, and found the place in readiness for an attack from the Indians, his men having returned a few hours before him. The savages, however, did not make their appearance, and there was every reason to believe that the fright Amos had given them had so worked upon their superstitious natures as to cause them to abandon the attempt upon which they had started.

OUR YOUNG FOLKS' STORY-TELLER.

TRUE STORY OF LITTLE BO-PEEP.

BY ELIZABETH BIGELOW.

ALL the bright eyes that read this story will have read, before, the charming stories of that most excellent old lady, Mother Goose, and very few, if any, there will be, that have not read the verses that recount the straying away of little Bo-peep's sheep, the anxiety she suffered on their account, especially in regard to their tails, her remarkable dreams, and the subsequent safe return of the wanderers. This is all of little Bo-peep's history that is recorded in the verses, and that is all that is generally known of her. But I know more; I can tell her whole history if I choose; and I do choose, because I don't think it right that any part of the history of so famous a person should be lost to the world.

How I came to know it doesn't matter. Perhaps a bird, whose great-great-grandmother lived in Bo-peep's day and had handed the story down to her descendants, whispered it in my ear; or perhaps one of the fairies, the good, little folk who never grow old and die, you know, but live serene and happy always in their shady bowers, gathering together all the pretty stories and songs that are afloat in the world, told it to me; or perhaps my own great-great-grandmother may have been a maid of honor at the very court where little Bo-peep afterwards—but, dear me! if I go on this way I shall have told the whole story before I think of it. So I'll begin at the beginning, in the proper way.

Once upon a time, when the world wasn't old and gray as it is now, but everything under the sun was new and bright, there lived, away off on the other side of the ocean, a little girl named Bo-peep. She lived in a little black cottage in a lonely, out-of-the-way place, but no one thought of being lonely there, for the cottage fairly swarmed with boys and girls.

They were not Bo-peep's own brothers and sisters; her mother had died when she was a baby, and her father had married again, and all these children who filled the cottage to overflowing were half-brothers and sisters. They were rude and selfish

children, and her stepmother was harsh and unkind, so that between them both, little Bo-peep led a sorry life. All the drudgery of the house was put upon her to do, and she had only one old, gray, homespun frock, for week day and Sundays alike, while her sisters had always two or three smart frocks, and yards and yards of gay ribbon to deck their hair.

As I said before all the drudgery was given Bo-peep to do, but now and then, in the autumn, when her brothers were at work in the forest, and it was too cool and windy for her sisters to go up on the hills, she was sent to keep the sheep. And those were happy days for Bo-peep. She wrapped herself in her plaid, and never minded the cold and the wind, she was so happy to be away from her noisy, quarrelsome brothers and sisters.

One cold, dreary day when the trees were all bare, and the brown leaves dancing horn-pipes with the wind over the highway and the fields, and the grass was getting so dry that the sheep could find only now and then a little patch of green to eat, Bo-peep sat on the bleak hillside, wrapped in her plaid and with her crook on the ground by her side, watching her sheep, and, at the same time, trying to knit though her fingers were numb with cold. All at once the clang of a horn sounded through the valley. Bo-peep rose to her feet, and shading her eyes with her hand she looked off in the distance and saw a band of horsemen, all in green hunting suits, with waving plumes in their hats, riding along the highway. It was the king and his courtiers, Bo-peep knew at once. Nobody else rode to the chase in such state, and she ran down to the foot of the hill and hid behind a low evergreen tree and waited for them to pass, for she wanted to see the king—the young king who had just succeeded to the throne, and who was so beloved by all the people. And he was well worth looking at; a comelier young king the sun never shone upon. At least that was what little Bo-peep thought as she peeped through the thick foliage of evergreen trees.

He was so tall and straight, and his cheeks were as red as apples, and his hair was so black and curling, and his forehead so white, and he looked so good and amiable, yet so brave, withal.

And he on his part was thinking, "Surely, a comelier little maiden the sun never shone upon!" For, while little Bo-peep in her eagerness to see forgot that she might be seen, the evergreen tree, which was much too good-natured and unselfish to wish to hide so much beauty, let its branches blow softly aside and disclose little Bo-peep's face, flushed rose-red with the cold and with eagerness, her brown eyes shining like stars, and her tangled brown curls blowing about in the wind. And when she saw the king's eyes upon her, and would have run away, what did the evergreen tree do but catch her plaid so fast in one of its branches that she could not stir. And while she stood there, blushing scarlet, and almost wishing the earth would open and swallow her up, she felt so ashamed to have the king and his courtiers see her in her ragged homespun frock and her faded plaid, the king took off his plumed hunting-cap and bowed as low in his saddle as if she had been a duchess, and when they saw the king all the courtiers saluted her in the same way, though they all looked very much astonished, and some of them turned up their noses at the idea of bestowing so much attention upon a little ragged shepherdess, caught in a tree by the roadside.

Some of them even went so far as to sneer and make jesting remarks aloud, but the king checked them with a haughty frown.

He was very silent and thoughtful, as he rode on, and every now and then he cast a backward glance towards the evergreen tree. And all the courtiers noticed that the merry mood he had been in before they saw little Bo-peep had entirely vanished.

In the meantime little Bo-peep had torn herself away from the evergreen tree and run up the hill as fast as she could. But alas! when she reached the top, little Bo-peep found she had lost her sheep. No trace of them was to be seen, far or near. She strained her eyes till they ached looking off in the distance, and she strained her ears to catch the tinkle of the sheep bells; but in vain. Then she ran all over the hill and around in every direction, with her heart growing heavier every moment.

How could she go home and tell her step-

mother that the sheep were lost? She would beat her, and when they had other sheep she would never be allowed to come on the hill with them. If the sheep had only wandered off, frightened by the clanging of the horn, who knew what might have befallen them before now?

Away down in the valley there lived an old hermit of wicked and malicious disposition, who amused himself by cutting off the tails of all the sheep who ventured near his dwelling, and hanging them up on trees.

What if her sheep should come wandering home and leave their tails behind them? Little Bo-peep sat down on a stone and wept as if her heart would break. Oh, if she had only stayed and watched her sheep, and not gone down to the roadside to see the handsome young king!

But the thought of the kindly manner in which he had smiled on her, and his gracious bow, comforted her a little, and her tears ceased to flow, and by and by she fell asleep there on the bleak hillside, with her head resting on the ground, and her crook tightly clasped in her hand. But the slumber wasn't refreshing, for she dreamed about her sheep, that the wicked old hermit was cutting their tails off, and they were bleating furiously. Then she awoke, crying, only to fall asleep again and dream that she saw their tails all hung on a tree in a row!

When she awoke again she didn't know what to do. She did not dare to go home, but night was fast coming on, and it was bleak and cold on the hillside. Bo-peep picked up her crook and went down into the highway and wandered along, not knowing where she was going, nor where she should find shelter for the night.

All at once, just at the moment when her strength seemed about to fail, and she was ready to despair, that clanging horn sounded through the valley again, and this time there was a faint, tinkling sound mingled with it, that sounded like her own sheep bells.

Very soon the gay party of huntsmen appeared in sight, and before them came a flock of sheep, driven by the king himself—Bo-peep's own sheep! And there were their tails, all safe and sound, in their proper places. Bo-peep forgot, in her joy, to be shy or afraid. She looked neither at the king nor at the courtiers. She hugged and kissed her silly old sheep, who came flocking about her and answered her cry of joy with loud baas. And when at last she did look

up, she saw that the king had dismounted from his horse, and was standing with his cap in his hand, bowing low before her.

He told her how they had met her sheep a long distance away, wandering along the highway, and how he had known them to be hers at once because he had seen them on the hillside when he passed that morning, and how in spite of the ridicule of the courtiers and their displeasure at losing the hunt, he had insisted upon driving them back, because they were hers. And while Bo-peep, whose shyness had all come back again, was courtesying and murmuring her thanks, with rosy cheeks and downcast eyes, he took her little brown hand in his own white, royal hand and asked her to be his queen.

And little Bo-peep, after giving one shy glance into his face to see that he was not laughing at her, dropped another little courtesy, and said yes.

Then the king set her on his own horse and walked himself by her side, and the sheep going on before, and in that way they rode up to the door of the little black cottage.

And out came her father and mother, and all her brother and sisters, to see the wonderful sight—Bo-peep sitting on the king's horse, while the king himself walked by her

side! When the king told them that she was going to the palace to be his queen they were all struck dumb with amazement, and did not scorn and laugh at her as little Bo-peep expected, and before they had recovered the use of their tongues Bo-peep was on her way to the palace, still in her tattered homespun gown and her faded plaid. And when they were exchanged for velvet and ermine the king said she looked no sweeter than when she had kept sheep on the hillside and peeped through the evergreen tree to see him ride by.

But the courtiers thought differently. They, who had sneered at the little shepherdess, were ready enough to do homage to the dainty little queen who ruled them all so royally.

And the king never regretted the day when he drove little Bo-peep's sheep home to her, for she was a loving and loyal little spouse, and the noblest and wisest queen that the kingdom had had for many a year; and the fame of her beauty and goodness was spread far and near.

And this is the true story of

"Little Bo-peep who lost her sheep
And couldn't tell where to find them;
But left them alone and they came home
And brought their tails behind them."

DIGGING FOR GOLD.

BY CAMILLA WILLIAM.

"ONCE upon a time," said Aunt Peggy, and immediately all the children pricked up their ears; for when Aunt Peggy began in these words, something was sure to follow. She wasn't an old maiden aunt for nothing, and she knew stories enough to last every night for years and years. So, as I said, when she began in this manner, the children pricked up their ears and looked at her.

There were Robert and Fanny Styles, thirteen years old—twins, of course—and there was Bessie Styles, three years younger, and Dick Styles, who was only six years old, but was a person of great consequence, especially when he got on thick shoes, and trained about the house beating a toy-drum.

When Dick got that drum out, his Aunt Peggy would put her hands over her ears and run up-stairs and lock herself into an attic chamber; and the next-door neighbor would say, "What a nuisance that boy is!" So you see Dick made quite a stir in the world.

Besides these youngsters there were Mr. Styles and Mrs. Styles, two nice persons who didn't object to their children having a good time, and there was Aunt Peggy herself, and there was Rollo the cat. Perhaps you think I needn't mention the cat; but if you were to spend one day at the Styleses you would learn better than that. Rollo Styles was a great purple-gray maltese cat, with splendid yellow eyes. He was lazy,

and as proud as Lucifer, and there was nothing in the house too good for him. Indeed, he acted sometimes as if there were nothing in the house good enough for him. He had a cushion in the corner of the hearth, and any one of the family would as soon think of taking Mr. Styles's own arm-chair, as of pushing Rollo out of his corner.

But there, we mustn't stop longer over the cat, but give a look at Aunt Peggy. I don't know how old she was, but I know that she used to take off her hair and take out her teeth at night, and people must be considerably old when they get coming to pieces that way. But she had a fair, white complexion yet, and when she was dressed up for company she had beautiful red cheeks. I don't know what in the world made her cheeks look so pink then, any more than they did just after she had washed her face, but I guess it was because she was pleased to be dressed up. Aunt Peggy was rather short and rather plump, and when she didn't laugh she had pleasant blue eyes; but when she did laugh they were all squinted up out of sight. She laughed now, when she saw all the children and the old folks and the cat looking at her, and her eyes disappeared entirely.

"Oh, now, Aunt Peggy!" said Rob, coaxingly, since she didn't go on. "Do tell us a story."

Aunt Peggy thought a minute, then she began:—

"Once upon a time there was a poor man who wanted to be rich. He wanted so terribly to be rich that he dreamed about it at night. He used to begin to dream just as soon as he fell asleep, and dream that he had piles of gold, and jewels, and houses, and lands, and horses, and carriages, and servants to wait on him. Of course this was delightful; but it wasn't so delightful to wake up and find himself sleeping in a poor little room on a hard bed, and to know that he would have nothing but mush and molasses for his breakfast when he should get up. So he concluded that he would lie in bed and dream all the time. Of course he had to get up once in a while to get something to eat; but he slept nearly all the time, and enjoyed his beautiful dreams.

"This had gone on for several months, when, one night, instead of the usual dream, he thought he saw a little old man coming toward him the moment he closed his eyes. This old man was very small, and

was dressed in gray, and had a high, pointed hat on his head, and a long beard flowing down his breast. The poor man wondered and opened his eyes, but saw nothing but darkness; but the minute he closed his eyes again there was the old man again, and this time he had a spade in his hand. It was all so plain that he opened his eyes yet again, and saw only the window of his little room, with the dark purple, star-spangled sky outside. So he closed his eyes for a third time yet, and there was the old man again, and this time he carried his spade over his shoulder, and he was whistling a tune, and looking at the poor man. Then the poor man forgot that he wasn't up and dressed with a hat on, and he gave a pull at his nightcap and made a low bow, and said, 'How do you do, sir?'

"At that the little man laughed and whistled, and said he, 'If you want gold, why don't you dig for it, you lazy fellow?'

"'I don't know where to dig,' says the other.

"'Will you dig where I tell you?' asked the little man, severely.

"The sleeper promised he would.

"'And don't stop digging till you see gold,' says the old man. 'Now I'll give you a chance. Get up and come with me.'

"So the man got up out of bed and dressed himself without any other light than the stars gave, and followed the little man in gray out-doors into the night.

"It was a very bleak place where the poor man lived—a place near the shore, rocky, sandy, and sterile. There were no other houses near, and the only tree that grew within half a mile stood beside his old tumble-down shanty. This was a large tree, but it was very old, and half the branches were decayed and dropping away.

"'Now,' said the little old man, 'dig about the roots of this tree till you find gold. Tell nobody anything about me, and do not stop digging till you have come to gold. Then after that sleep only three hours in a night, and always sleep with your spade under your head. It will make a very good pillow. If any one comes by and asks what you are about, say that you are going to dig up the tree, roots and all, for fuel.'

"Well, the old man gave the other his spade and immediately disappeared, and the poor man began to dig with a will. He dug and dug, and was beginning to be very tired and a little discouraged, when, as he lifted a

spade-ful of earth, up came a bright gold coin. The poor man screamed with delight, and worked still harder. Presently another coin came up; then two or three at a time; and after a while he came upon a heap of them. The sun had begun to rise, and these beautiful gold-pieces shone in his beams as bright and fresh as if they had just come from the mint.

"The poor man was overjoyed. Here, at last, was all he had longed for. But he was afraid of being found out and robbed, so he carried all the gold he had found into his shanty, and hid it in a large hole under the hearth. He had to go three times to carry it all, and when he had placed it in the hole he put the stones carefully over it, and went back to his digging. But he found no more that morning. About noon a man came past and asked him what he was digging for.

"I am digging up the old tree for fuel," said the poor man just as he had been bid. Then the other man went on, and he began digging again.

"It would take too long to tell you how much money he dug up, for there are not figures enough in the arithmetic for it. But he found so much that he could no longer conceal it. So he went to work and built him a new and a bigger shanty just around the tree so that no one should see him digging, and he cut the top of the tree off. And one day he went to a city not far away and put a lot of gold into a bank there, and got a check-book. Then one night the little old man appeared to him and told him that there wasn't any more gold, and that he should stop digging and build him a house on the spot where the old tree had stood. When the poor man, now a rich man, waked his spade had disappeared."

"Did he build a house?" asked Rob, when his aunt stopped as though she had got through.

"Yes, he built a splendid house, and had all he wanted and a great deal more."

"Peggy," said Mrs. Styles, "I think that your story has a very bad moral. It teaches that the way to prosper is to lie still and wish for prosperity."

"I can't help it," says Aunt Peggy. "I tell the story as 'twas told to me."

Mr. Styles had been considering, with his head leaning on his hand. Now he looked up, and said:—

"I've been thinking that gold may be found in our garden."

All the children exclaimed, their eyes as round as saucers.

"Yes," pursued Mr. Styles, "I think that gold might be obtained by digging there; not in any particular spot, but all over the surface."

The children coaxed him to tell more, but he wouldn't say another word, and pretty soon sent them all to bed.

Rob Styles was just about crazy with his aunt's story, and what his father had said. He could scarcely sleep a wink all night, and he woke from his one little nap as soon as there was a faint peep of day. It was spring time, and the first daylight came pretty early. Now Rob liked to lie in bed, and he hated to work, and could scarcely be got to do a thing about the house. But then, the prospect of gold! He hesitated a while, but presently jumped out of bed and dressed himself hastily, and stole down stairs without making the least noise. The garden his father had spoken of was out behind the stable, and no one could see or hear him from the house. So he got a spade and went to digging.

It was pretty hard work, for the garden had not been touched yet from the year before; but he persevered. He dug and dug, but saw no gold. He recollected that his father had said it should be dug on the surface, so he tried all about, but still with no sight of gold. His hands were blistered, his arms and whole body were tired, and the perspiration was pouring over him, but still he spaded away, thinking that perhaps the very next lift of earth would have a bright gold-piece in it.

The morning brightened, the sun rose, and presently Rob heard the breakfast-bell ring; and still he had found no gold, though every foot of the garden had been dug over. He dropped the spade, weary and disappointed, but resolving to come again after breakfast and poke over the clods a little more to see if he had not perhaps missed what he sought. He thought that he saw a head bob away from the back window of the stable as he started to go into the house, but it might be a mistake.

They were all seated at the breakfast-table when he went in, and his father helped him immediately. "I know Rob must be hungry," he said.

Rob looked at him, wondering what he meant, then blushed very red; for he saw that he had been found out.

"Did you find any gold?" asked his father, with a queer little smile.

"Now, father, you weren't joking last night, were you?" asked Rob, dropping his knife and fork.

"No, Rob," his father said, kindly, pitying the boy's disappointment; "but I didn't mean what you thought. I meant that the way to earn gold was by honest work—by digging and planting. That piece of ground is to be planted with beans and corn, and we can turn them into gold. That is better than a lazy digging for coin."

Rob dropped his eyes to hide the tears that filled them. He was so tired, and so terribly disappointed.

"Let me tell you one thing, my boy," his father said. "Nothing is worth having which we do not have to work for. What we do is better than what we get. You will learn that some day."

Rob said nothing, but tried to hide the

blisters on his hands. He didn't like being laughed at.

After breakfast his father went to him, as he stood looking out of the window, and putting his hand over the boy's shoulder, held a bright gold dollar close to his eyes.

"It is worth that," he said; "you have made the land ready for planting. And if you want to coin still more gold from it, you shall have a part of the garden to plant for yourself, and sell the produce."

Rob brightened at that. After all, work wasn't so bad a thing.

"May I really, father?" he said.

Well, I can't stop to tell you how much he earned that summer; it wasn't millions and millions of dollars, but it did him just as much good, and more, than millions would; for it taught him habits of industry and enterprise, and made his father's and mother's eyes brighter than any gold coin that ever was dug out of the earth.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

TREATMENT OF SUNSTROKE.

SUNSTROKE is caused by excessive heat, and especially if the weather is "muggy." It is more apt to occur on the second, third or fourth day of a heated term than on the first. Loss of sleep, worry, excitement, close sleeping-rooms, debility, abuse of stimulants, predispose to it. It is more apt to attack those working in the sun, and especially between the hours of eleven o'clock in the forenoon and four in the afternoon.

On hot days wear thin clothing. Have as cool sleeping-rooms as possible. Avoid loss of sleep and all unnecessary fatigue. If working in-doors, and where there is artificial heat, laundries, etc., see that the room is well-ventilated. If working in the sun wear a light hat (not black, as it absorbs the heat), straw, etc., and put inside of it, on the head, a wet cloth or a large green leaf. Frequently lift the hat from the head and see that the cloth is wet. Do not check perspiration, but drink what water you need to keep it up, as perspiration prevents the body from being overheated. Have, whenever possible, an additional shade, as a thin

umbrella when walking, a canvas or broad cover when working in the sun.

When much fatigued do not go to work, but be excused from work, especially after eleven o'clock in the morning, on the very hot days if the work is in the sun. If a feeling of fatigue, dizziness, headache or exhaustion occurs, cease work immediately, lie down in a shady and cool place, apply cold cloths to, and pour cold water over, head and neck.

If anyone is overcome by the heat, send immediately for the nearest good physician. While waiting for the physician give the person cold drinks of water or cold black tea, or cold coffee, if able to swallow. If the skin is hot and dry, sponge with or pour cold water over the body and limbs, and apply to the head pounded ice wrapped in a towel or other cloth. If there is no ice at hand keep a cold cloth on the head, and pour cold water on it as well as on the body. If the person is pale, very faint, and pulse feeble, let him inhale ammonia in two tablespoonfuls of water with a little sugar.

THE HOUSEKEEPER.

BALLOU'S MONTHLY has treated before extensively of omelets, but has still several new wrinkles to give its readers on the subject. The greatest fault in the preparation of an omelet lies in the fact that they are generally cooked too much. A tablespoonful of butter is sufficient for an omelet of three or four eggs. Cut it in bits, and let it melt as quickly as possible by shaking the pan containing it over the fire; keep shaking constantly to prevent scorching, the slightest suspicion of which will be fatal to your dish. When fully melted, and bubbling, pour in the beaten eggs, one at a time, distributing them evenly over the pan. Lift it here and there with a broad-bladed knife, and as soon as it begins to be firm or "set," add the oysters, or whatever ingredient you have prepared, and fold in the shape of an old-fashioned tart. It should take less than a minute from the time the first egg is put into the pan.

THE FONDUE.—Take as many eggs as there are guests; a third as much by weight of Gruyere's cheese, and half the weight of the cheese in butter. Beat up the eggs in the saucepan; add the cheese and butter, the first grated, and the latter cut in bits; set over the fire, and stir with a wooden spoon until it is thick, and of a soft, omelet-like consistency. Serve on a hot platter. This healthful and appetizing dish is of Swiss origin, and being so quickly made, is convenient to set before unexpected guests.

OMELET AUX CROUTES.—Fry a cupful of small dice of bread in very hot fat, as in making croutons for soup; make an omelet with four eggs; season with salt and pepper, and just before folding scatter the crusts over it.

The spiciest sort of an accompaniment to a breakfast steak is an onion omelet. Peel and slice onions until you have a small half-cupful; fry them light brown in butter, and add them to an omelet of four eggs just before folding.

FRIED EGGS.—A new way to fry eggs is to cook them in hot butter, ham, or bacon fat until done to the required degree; put them on a hot dish; pour almost all the fat from the pan; add a large cucumber pickle chopped; shake it about for a minute, and pour over the eggs.

In a large and popular restaurant in New York city, eggs are fried on a soapstone griddle. They are cooked to a delicate brown on both sides, resembling an irregular pancake in shape. The yolk is of the consistency of a soft-fried egg cooked in the usual manner, and the white is tender, and without the tough, leathery edge which makes a fried egg so indigestible. No fat is used in the process.

ROYAL DIPLOMATIC PUDDING.—There are two ways, if not more, of making this elegant dessert. According to Miss Corson, slice two ounces of citron; stone a quarter of a pound of raisins, and wash and dry a quarter of a pound of currants. Put in a buttered mould slices of stale sponge cake, alternating with the fruit prepared as above, and pour over all a soft custard made by beating six eggs with a pint of milk, four ounces of sugar and a teaspoonful of vanilla essence. Put an ounce of butter cut in bits over the top, and set the mould in a saucepan containing enough boiling water to reach two-thirds up the sides of the mould. Simmer the pudding an hour. When the pudding is done turn it out of the mould; dust with powdered sugar, and serve with a sauce made by dissolving a teaspoonful of cornstarch in a tablespoonful of cold water, and stirring it into a cup of boiling water with two tablespoonfuls of currant jelly. Bring to a boil, and add a glass of wine.

Boston's Miss Parloa's recipe is rather more elaborate, and of such different materials that one is tempted to ask, "What's in a name?" Soak half a box of gelatine in one-third of a cup of cold water for two hours, and pour on two-thirds of a pint of boiling water; stir until thoroughly dissolved (over the fire if necessary); add the juice of one lemon, one cup of sugar, and a half-pint of wine; strain through a coarse napkin, which Miss Parloa says is much better than cheese-cloth or a strainer. Simply let the mixture through without pressing or squeezing. Take an oval tin mould holding two quarts, and set it in a pan of cracked ice; pour in a layer of the jelly, and set the rest aside where it will get cool, and still remain liquid. Lay a weight over the mould to steady it while the layer hardens; cut some bright candied French cherries in halves; make an oval design on the hardened jelly, fixing them in place with a few spoonfuls of the liquid jelly. As soon as these harden over the cherries, pour on another layer of jelly, enough to cover them. When this hardens, set a smaller mould holding a quart on the top of the jelly, and fill it with cracked ice. In the space between the moulds pour in the rest of the jelly. When it is firm lift out the smaller mould. To do this remove the ice and fill it for a second with hot water when it will lift easily. The space thus left is to be filled with the following: Put a scant cup of milk over the fire, and pour it over one-half box of gelatine that has soaked for an hour in one-half cup of cold water, with the yolks of five eggs beaten with one-half cup of sugar. Strain, and add two tablespoonfuls of wine and a teaspoonful of essence of vanilla.

Stir this custard until it thickens and add half a pint of cream whipped to a stiff froth. Let it cool, and turn it into the space mentioned. When all is hard, turn the pudding out of the mould and serve with soft custard around it.

SOFT CUSTARD.—For this beat together the yolks of eight eggs and the whites of two, with a scant half-cup of sugar. Use a wooden spoon, and beat until the eggs are broken but not light. Add one cup of milk, and meanwhile bring to a boil the remainder of the quart. Lift it from the stove, and let it cool just one minute before pouring over the beaten eggs and sugar; put into a double boiler and stir constantly until it begins to thicken. If left for an instant beyond the thickening point it will begin to curdle. Prevention is the better cure, but if it should happen to curdle, pour it quickly into a cold saucepan and add half a cup of cold milk, stirring until smooth again. Add a teaspoonful of salt, and when cool, the same quantity of flavoring.

LEMON SYRUP.—When people feel the need of an acid, if they would let vinegar alone and use lemons or apples, they would feel just as well satisfied, and receive no injury. When lemons are cheap, purchase several dozen at once, and prepare them for use in the warm, trying days of spring and summer, when acids are so grateful and useful. Press your hand on the lemon and roll it back and forth briskly on the table, then press the juice into a bowl or tumbler—never into a tin. Strain out all the seeds, as they give a bad taste; remove all the pulp from the peels and boil in water (a pint for a dozen pulps) to extract the acid. A few minutes' boiling is enough; then strain the water with the juice on the lemons, put a pound of white sugar to a pint of the juice, boil ten minutes, bottle it, and your lemonade is ready. Put a tablespoonful or two of this lemon syrup in a glass of water, and you will have a cool, healthful drink.

REMEDY FOR INSECT BITES.—When a mosquito, flea, gnat, or other noxious insect punctures the human skin, it deposits or injects an atom of an acidulous fluid of a poisonous nature. The results are irritation, a sensation of tickling, itching, or of pain. The tickling of flies we are comparatively indifferent about; but the itch produced by a flea, or gnat, or other noisome insect, disturbs our serenity, and, like the pain of a wasp or a bee sting, excites us to a remedy. The best remedies for the sting of insects are those which will instantly neutralize this acidulous poison deposited in the skin. These are either ammonia or borax. The alkaline reaction of borax is scarcely yet sufficiently appreciated.

However, a time will come when its good qualities will be known, and more universally valued than ammonia, or, as it is commonly termed, "hartshorne." The solution of borax for insect bites is made thus: Dissolve one ounce of borax in one pint of water that has been boiled and allowed to cool. Instead of plain water, distilled rose water, elder, or orange water is more pleasant. The bites are to be dabbled with the solution so long as there is any irritation. For bees' or wasps' stings, the borax solution may be made of twice the above strength. In every farmhouse this solution should be kept as a household remedy.

SLEEP AS A MEDICINE.—A physician says that the cry for rest has always been louder than the cry for food. Not that it is more important, but it is often harder to obtain. The best rest comes from sound sleep. Of two men or women, otherwise equal, the one who sleeps the better will be the more healthy and efficient. Sleep will do much to cure irritability of temper, peevishness and uneasiness. It will restore vigor to an overworked brain. It will build up and make strong a weak body. It will cure a headache. It will cure a broken spirit. It will cure sorrow. Indeed, we might make a long list of nervous and other maladies that sleep will cure. The cure of sleeplessness requires a clean, good bed, sufficient exercise to promote weariness, pleasant occupation, good air, and not too warm a room, a clear conscience, and avoidance of stimulants and narcotics. For those who are overworked, haggard, nervous, who pass sleepless nights, we commend the adoption of such habits as will secure sleep; otherwise life will be short, and what there is of it sadly imperfect.

Imitation is proverbially the sincerest flattery. Undoubtedly in most cases such flattery is agreeable, but the owners of a popular proprietary article are pardonable if they resent such imitation. Pearline, an article whose merits have been judiciously advertised, and are widely known, has achieved a popularity which makes it the mark of imitators. These latter are being overhauled in various courts throughout the country for peddling a compound put up like Pearline, which they represent to be the genuine article. As some persons have been deceived by these unscrupulous tricksters, the exposure of their methods will have the effect of stopping a swindling traffic by which many have been victimized.

All mothers should have "Our Baby's First and Second Years," by Marion Harland. It is a splendid little book, and is furnished free upon receipt of your address, by Reed & Carnrick, New York. Send for it, and you will find it contains many valuable suggestions.

CURIOUS AND OTHER MATTERS.

STORY OF THE ORIGIN OF VICTORIA.—The death of Peter Whyte recalls the strange story of the founding of Victoria, Australia. In an Australian mining-camp at one of the tents sat four men, June 10, 1858, talking earnestly of their future and bemoaning the past. For several months these four men had worked together in the same claim, sometimes getting barely sufficient for daily wants, sometimes not even that. For several weeks, indeed, they had labored without any result. After a long discussion they decided to abandon the claim. Down in the mine the three looked gloomily around, with a kind of sulky regret at having to leave the scene of so much useless toil. "Good-by," said one. "I'll give you a farewell blow," and raising his pick he struck the quartz, making splinters fly in all directions. His practiced eye caught a glittering speck on one of the bits at his feet. He examined it and the place he had struck, when, with a loud exclamation, he knelt and satisfied himself that it was gold. He then commenced picking vigorously. His mates caught the meaning, and followed his example. In dead silence they worked on—they had discovered a monster nugget. Then a wild, glad shout sounded in the ears of the man at the windlass, who had sunk in a half-doze, feeling probably the want of his breakfast. To his inquiry, "What is going on?" the cry came, "Wind up;" and as he did there arose to the surface a huge mass of virgin gold. When fully exposed to view the men were almost insane with joy. After watching it through the day and live-long night, they had it conveyed in safety to the bank. It was named "The Welcome Stranger," and yielded the fortunate discoverers of it £6000. On the site of that spot the forest and the scrub have disappeared, and their place is occupied by the finest city on the celebrated gold-field of Victoria.

THE RUN OF THE MAID OF THE MIST.—The boat which made the trip was built in 1854. For a while she took passengers from both the American and Canadian shores, and ran up very close to the foot of the falls. Owing to some change in her appointments which confined her to the Canadian shore for the reception of passengers, she became unprofitable. Her owner, wishing to leave the place, determined to sell her, and he received an offer of little more than half her cost if he would deliver her at Niagara, opposite the fort. This he decided to do, after consulting with Joel R. Robinson, who had acted as pilot and captain in her trip under the falls. Mr. Robinson consented to act as pilot for the fearful voyage, and the engineer, Mr. Jones, agreed to go with him. A machinist, Mr. Mc-

Intyre, volunteered to share the risk with them. The boat was put in complete trim, all superfluous articles being removed from the deck and hold. Notice was given of the time of starting, and a large crowd assembled to witness the fearful plunge, no one expecting to see either boat or crew again after they should leave the dock, which was just above the railway suspension bridge.

About 3 o'clock in the afternoon of June 15, 1861, the engineer took his place in the hold, and knowing that their flitting trip would be short at the longest, set his steam-valve at the proper gauge and waited the tinkling signal that should start them on their flying voyage. Robinson took his place at the wheel and gave the starting signal. With a shriek from her whistle and a white puff from her escape pipe, the boat ran up the eddy a short distance, cleared the smooth water and shot like an arrow into the rapid, and when a third of the way down it, a jet of water struck against her rudder, a column dashed up under her starboard side, keeled her over, carried away her smokestack, started her overhanging on that side, threw Robinson on his back, and threw McIntyre against her starboard wheel-house with such power as to break it through.

Every looker-on breathed freer as she emerged, shook her wounded sides, slid into the whirlpool, and for a moment rose again on an even keel. Robinson rose at once, seized the helm, set her to the right of the large pot in the pool, then turned her directly through the neck of it. Thence, after another drenching from the waves, she dashed on without further accident to the quiet bosom of the river below Lewiston. The boat was 72 feet long, with 17 feet breadth of beam, 8 feet depth of hold, and carried an engine of 100 horse-power.

THE BUILDERS OF THE PYRAMIDS.—A personal inspection of the pyramids of Egypt made by a quarry owner, who spent some time recently on the Nile, had led him to the conclusion that the old Egyptians were better builders than those of the present day. He states that there are blocks of stone in the pyramids which weigh three or four times as much as the obelisk on the embankment. He saw a stone whose estimated weight was 880 tons. But then the builders of the pyramids counted human labor lightly. They had great masses of subjects upon whom to draw, and most of their work was done by sheer manual labor and force. There are stones in the pyramids thirty feet in length, which fit so closely together that a penknife may be run over the surface without discovering the break between them. They are not laid with mortar,

either. There is no machinery so perfect that it will make two surfaces thirty feet in length which will meet together in unison as these stones in the pyramids meet. It is supposed that they were rubbed backwards and forwards upon each other until the surfaces were assimilated.

THE ANTARCTIC OCEAN.—The Antarctic Ocean occupies a position around the south pole similar to that of the Arctic Ocean at the opposite end of the earth. It fills all the space to the south of the Antarctic Circle. It differs vastly, however, from its northern homologue, for, instead of having land as its outer circumference, it has water. While the North American, the European, and the Asiatic coasts encircle the Northern Ocean, the Pacific, the Atlantic, and the Indian Oceans mingle their waters with those of the frozen zone at the south.

As it differs in physical conditions, so also it differs in having received much less attention from the world at large. While the aim of innumerable expeditions for the past four hundred years has been to find a northwest passage to Asia, to plant a flag at latitude 90 degrees, or to rescue some unfortunate commander and his crew from a horrible fate, and while thousands of dollars have been expended, and hundreds of lives have been lost, there is a strange contrast offered when we turn to the far south. The expeditions which have been sent out by the great nations of the world to explore the vast watery expanse about the southern pole are so few as to be counted on the fingers of one hand, and all the ships which have left records of any extensive explorations beyond the Antarctic Circle might be counted on the fingers of two hands. And yet "within the periphery of the Antarctic Circle," says Lieutenant Maury, "is included an area equal in extent to one-sixth of the entire land surface of our planet. Most of this immense area is as unknown to the inhabitants of the earth as the interior of one of Jupiter's satellites. . . . For the last two hundred years the Arctic Ocean has been a theatre of exploration; but as for the Antarctic, no expedition has attempted to make any persistent exploration, or even to winter there." It is noteworthy, too, that in the voyages which have been made, not a ship nor a life has been lost south of the circle. "It does not appear," says one writer, "that Antarctic voyages would be attended with any excessive degree of danger. . . . It may even be found that the Antarctic barriers are impenetrable; but this has certainly not as yet been demonstrated."

"OLD SORREL," General Stonewall Jackson's war horse, which has been in the hands of a Washington taxidermist, is now in Richmond,

Va., mounted on a rock of moss-green color, in an exceedingly life-like attitude. Of Old Sorrel's early history nothing is known. He was one of a carload of United States horses captured by the Confederates, and was bought by General Jackson from his chief quartermaster, Major John A. Harman. At that time, soon after the battle of Manassas, the prevalent opinion was that the war would soon end, and Jackson's idea was that the horse would serve him in the army, and would then do for a riding-horse for his wife. When General Jackson was a lieutenant in the United States Army, and stationed at Fort Hamilton, New York, he owned a horse named Fancy, and was very much attached to him, and so he named the little sorrel after him. Jackson said of the little sorrel, which afterwards came to be called Old Sorrel, that he had never known a horse of easier gait. "A seat on him was," he said, "like being rocked in a cradle." Fancy never was a stylish horse, but though Jackson had two fine mounts—Superior, a magnificent bay presented to him by the people of Augusta, and Big Sorrel—Fancy he loved best and trusted most, for the little animal was rapid and hardy, and was as calm under fire as the man who rode him. A peculiarity about this tough little horse, often noticed and commented upon by the soldiers, was that on a march, when a stop was made and Jackson dismounted, the little sorrel would lie down like a dog. Jackson rode the little sorrel through the Romney campaign; was on him at Kernstown, McDowell, Port Republic, Winchester and Cross Keys. Mounted on him he appeared at the head of his division when, like a thunderbolt from a clear sky, he swept down upon McClellan's right at Cold Harbor, in 1862. His master dead, Little Sorrel was sent to Mrs. Jackson's home, near Charlottesville. There he was kept for many years. Finally, in response to requests, he was sent to the Virginia Military Institute. When the New Orleans Exposition began, Mrs. Jackson permitted him to be exhibited there for the benefit of the Soldier's Home. Coming back from New Orleans he was placed at the Soldier's Home, and there died March 14, 1886.

AN ANCIENT UMBRELLA.—An umbrella that was brought to this country from Holland in 1630 has been on exhibition in Albany, N. Y. It bears the name of an Italian maker. It has been asserted that umbrellas are a later invention than 1630, and that an Englishman first appeared in the streets of London in the last century with one to protect him from the rain. The fact is, however, that umbrellas were in use by the Egyptians 4000 years ago. The umbrellas seen sometimes attached to a vehicle in the streets are seen pictured upon the wall paintings of ancient Egypt.

RUTHVEN'S PUZZLE PAGE.

Send all communications for this Department to
EDWIN R. BRIGGS, West Bethel, Oxford
County, Maine.

Answers to May Puzzles.

67.—Good Books.

68.—M A I M A C R I D M I R A D O R M I D G E D O E R	69.—S R U M R E B E L S U B E R I C M E R G E L I E C
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70.—An(tithe)tic. 72.—Ap(aume)e. 74.—Aphere)sis. 76.—P. M A P C A T E R B A N A N A S D E C A Y S O L N	71.—De(cade)nt. 73.—C(anta)lever. 75.—A(rach)is. 77.—S A C T A S H E S S C H O L I A T E L L S S I S A
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78.—Blessings ever wait on virtuous deeds.

1.—A *Charade*.

The TOTAL now is out of date;
Its vast expanse was much too great.
One lady, sitting in a coach,
Would hesitate to let approach
Another of her sex, for fear
Damage to both should soon appear.
One maiden we have read about,
Returning from a country rout,
Was overtaken by a storm,
Which soon diminished much her form,
Collapsing TOTAL, which, you see,
Was one too two for such a three.

MAUDE.

Decapitations.

- 2.—Behead a sort of plaster, or strong mortar, and leave rich tapestry.
- 3.—Treatment, and leave a man of gravity or wisdom.
- 4.—To boast, and leave a female relation.
- 5.—A carousal, and leave to attack.
- 6.—A sea-snail, and leave the same name.
- 7.—A plant, and leave a weapon.

CYRIL DEANE.

8.—A *Pentagon*.

- 1 A letter. 2 To marry. 3 To renovate. 4 A threatener. 5 To end. 6 One of the mechanical powers. 7 A certain portion of a sail.

MARQUIS.

9.—A *Octagon*.

- 1 Accident. 2 Governs. 3 Pertaining to the shoulder. 4 A species of fish. 5 The point in the moon's orbit nearest to the earth. 6 More secure. 7 That side of an object which is protected from the wind by the object itself.

DUPLEX R.

10.—*Double Letter Enigma*.

- In "telegraph wire;"
In "lofty church spire;"
In "civilized men;"
In "solid gold pen."

The WHOLE is somewhat costly,
When of *primal* it is made;
The ENTIRE is a *final*,
Worn by both man and maid.

MARQUIS.

Squares.

- 11.—1 One who disbelieves the divinity of Christ. 2 To wrinkle. 3 Heathen gods. 4 A tag of a point carved. 5 Collections, as of boxes.
12.—1 Very small. 2 Elevated. 3 One who subdues. 4 Small notices. 5 Elegant.

CYRIL DEANE.

Curtailments.

- 13.—Curtail shrewd, and leave a trade.
14.—An Eastern drink, and leave a genus of ruminant quadrupeds.
15.—Business, and leave crude, black copper.
16.—To continue, and leave a kind of coloring matter.
17.—The beadle of a cathedral church, and leave the spindle of a watch balance.
18.—A particular beat of drum, and leave classes of objects divided into several subordinate species.
19.—Of weighty character, and leave substance.
20.—To subdue, and leave a thin, sour beer used in Russia.
21.—An ecclesiastical society, and leave true love.
22.—Dramatic literature, and leave a minute quantity.

TIDAL WAVE.

Answers in two Months.

Prizes.

For the largest list of correct answers to this month's puzzles, received before July 10th, we offer an illustrated novelette; and for the next best list, a small book of beautiful poems.

Solvers.

Answers to the March puzzles were received from Betsey B., Teddy, Katie Smith, Nicholas, Tri Angle, J. D. L., Ida May, Eulalie, Bert Rand, Cora A. L., Vinnie, Birdie Browne, Geraldine, Ann Eliza, Peggy, Good Hugh and Black Hawk.

Prize-Winners.

Tri Angle, Toledo, Ohio, for the largest list of correct answers. Nicholas, Chicago, Ill., for the next best list. No. 33 was too deep a mystery for our readers to solve, and one of the best charades we have yet published.

EDITOR'S DRAWER.

THINGS PLEASANT AND OTHERWISE.

TOO UTTALY UTTA.

I'm called an æsthetic young man,
And wude people say I am silly;
I carway a wose and a fan,
And dine on the scent of a lily.
I'm touched with the bwic-a-bwac cwaze,
A plaque sets my heart in a flutta,
I'm sweet and wefined in my ways,—
In fact, I'm decidedly utta;
Yes, utta;
In fact, I'm decidedly utta.

I dwess in a picturesque style,
My costume is simple and soulful;
My face weahs an æsthetic smile
That's half idiotic, half doleful.
I've nothing in common with those
Wude people who spwing from the gutta;
But that's too absurd to suppose—
I'm quite too decidedly utta;
Yes, utta;
I'm quite too decidedly utta.

On wising I pwactise a while
In front of my miwow each mawning,
To catch the expression and smile
That ignowant people are scawning.
And when through the city I pass,
I set the girls' hearts in a flutta;
Though some of them call me an ass,
What mattahs it while I am utta?
Yes, utta?
What mattahs it while I am utta?
—*Somerville Journal.*

THE COUNTRYFIED CHOIR.

It was a neat little church in a rural town, and filled with well-cultured people; but the choir was far behind the times. Really, they did not seem to know what is expected of choirs in these days. There was a double quartette of them, and all sat quietly in their seats, like the rest of the worshipers. Why, they acted just as if they expected to join in the worship themselves, instead of faithfully doing their work like outside hirelings who had no interest in the concern. They were not whispering around, and making general commotion to get things ready. They did not seem to feel their responsibilities. They were so countrified that their music was all prepared, and their books lying closed before them. When the opening anthem had been completed, a word from the leader, to which all gave heed, then books closed, and all was quiet again, and the choir, making themselves a part of the worshipping people, gave attention to whatever was the order. They did not seem to know that this was the time for general gossip, nor to realize how like unsophisticated children they appeared

paying grave attention to what was going on in the other end of the church. How much more business-like it would have been for them to have had their heads in a huddle, filling the room with whispering, fixing up the next piece of music, and agreeing how each should render his part. Innocents that they were, they had arranged all that in advance, as the minister his sermon, so they could join in the worship—the goody goodies! And when the opening hymns were all out of the way, they were so uncultured as not to know that that was just the time for the morning paper or the illustrated weekly, for them to open and rustle, and gossip and giggle over. Nor even did any of them get away into a corner with his novel, nor any two with a pocket chess-board. Not even the organist went out to a neighboring saloon to while the half-hour away; nor did the two lovers go and sit in the shade of the trees. They just sat there, entering into the service in all its parts, and giving so close attention that when the minister said, "Please omit the second stanza," they did not fail to hear it, and so go on singing the second while the congregation sang the third. It was most astonishing that any parish, however rural, should be so far behind the times.

There is a marked difference between the manner in which a woman absorbs soda water, and the *modus operandi* adopted by the average man. The latter stands up straight, grasps the handle of the glass-holder firmly, holds it up even with his face, waits till the foam settles the least trifle, inserts half of his face in the foam, and gulps the compound down at a single draught. The woman goes about it in a different way. She daintily extends the thumb and forefinger, picks up the glass carefully and raises it about six inches from the counter. Then she bends her head forward, and as soon as she does so her lips also bend forward until one would think she was going to whistle. But she doesn't. She just bends lower and lower, until she gets where she can touch the edge of the glass with her extended lips without wetting the remainder of her features. Furthermore, she doesn't finish the task at the first attempt. She drinks her soda methodically; the man drinks his impulsively; which shows that in this, at least, the difference between a man's way and a woman's is reversed.

A Paris correspondent gives the following characteristic story of the expedient of an impecunious medical student:—

The landlady of a certain medical student, who ineffectually dunned her delinquent tenant for some time, resolved at last upon resorting to extreme measures. She entered the student's room one morning and said, in a decided tone:—

"You must either pay me my rent, or be off this very day."

"I prefer to be off," said the student, who on his side was prepared for the encounter.

"Well, then, sir, pack up directly."

"I assure you, madam, I will go with the utmost expedition, if you will assist me a little."

"With the greatest pleasure."

The student thereupon went to a wardrobe, tranquilly opened a drawer and took out a skeleton, which he handed to the dame.

"Will you have the kindness to place this at the bottom of my trunk?" folding it up.

"What is that?" asked the landlady, recoiling a little.

"That?"

"Yes, that."

"Pooh, that! Oh, it is the skeleton of my first landlord! He was inconvenient enough to claim the rent of three terms that I owed him, and then— Be careful not to break it; it is No. 1 of my collection."

"Monsieur!" exclaimed the dame, growing visibly paler.

The student, without replying, opened a second drawer, and took another skeleton.

"This—this is my landlady in the Rue l'Ecole de Medecin; a very worthy woman, but who also demanded the rent of two terms. Will you place it upon the other? It is No. 2."

The landlady opened her two eyes as large as *porte-cocheres*.

"This," continued the student, "this is No. 3. They are all here! A very honest man, and whom I did not pay, either. Let us pass on to No. 4."

But the landlady was no longer there. She had fled, almost frightened to death.

From that day no more was said about the rent.

Jones boards on a street running into Union Park. The house is kept by an elderly widow lady, with thin lips; a woman that no cat of discrimination would get up her back at without thinking twice about it. Her chief assistant is an elderly maiden-daughter, with many of the characteristics, physical and mental, of her respected mother. Jones, one of her most esteemed boarders, is a quiet, retiring, and precise man. In an evil hour he refused to lend Smith, an impecunious friend, who called on him the other night, the trifling sum of a V. Smith said nothing; but he was seen next day, with a countenance hideously distorted with malice, hatred, and revenge, dropping a postal-card into a letter-box. On that postal-card, which was addressed

to Jones, were inscribed the following words:—

"DEAR JONES,—I have called and seen your quarters, and think that you hardly did them justice in the description which you gave me of them. The house certainly does not look as if, to quote your words, 'it hadn't been swept since Susan B. Anthony wore short dresses;' no smell of onion hash was perceptible in the passages; and as for the ladies who manage it, the elder is as handsome and amiable a woman as I have ever seen, and her nose does not bear any signs that she drinks to excess; while as to the junior, I did not consider her as by any means the 'sallow, scrawny shrew' I had been led to expect."

"I guess," said the vindictive Smith, calmly, as he left the letter-box behind him, "I guess that when the ladies—as they inevitably will—read that postal-card, I will be about a V ahead of Jones."

If he had seen the old lady next morning, after the postman came round, putting a broom behind the hall door, where it would be within easy reach, and seen her daughter pass her time between having fits of hysterics and sharpening her finger-nails on the stove, he would have been confirmed in the opinion he had formed.

There was a man who had great business ability. He was a Jew. He had not a cent. The last two statements do not at first sight appear to hitch, but truth is stranger than fiction. There was another man who had the cent. He was also a Jew. The centless man with the ability was the kind of thing the ability-less man with the cent was looking for. They made a partnership. One thousand dollars capital represented the cented partner, and the ability the other fellow, and the combination worked. They made money, and made more and more still, until one day the man who had the capital died. You see the firm was lucky. If the fellow with the business ability had died the other fellow might have "busted." The partner who died left all his property to the living partner, with the proviso that he should put the original capital of one thousand dollars in the coffin. He wanted capital on the other side, you see, and I suppose he thought that fellows with business ability and no money were just as much in the majority there as they are here. Well, the surviving partner went to the rabbi and told him all about it. He was honest and conscientious.

"You go and put it in the coffin—the one thousand dollars; you can afford it, and it will make your mind easy," said the rabbi.

The next time the rabbi met the business man he found him very happy.

"Did you settle that thing?"

"Oh, yes; that's all fixed."

"And you put the one thousand dollars in the coffin?"

"Yes; that is, I put a check there payable to his order."—*San Francisco Chronicle*.

I like a boy who reasons a thing out and can defend his action for doing thus and so. Therefore, I had a very pleasant chat with "Baldy" the bootblack, yesterday. When I asked him why he wore one boot and one shoe, instead of a pair of one sort, he answered:—

"I'm a boy only thirteen years old, and I don't know whether boots will agree with me better than shoes. I'm wearing one of each kind to see which fits my gait best. Half this world is limping around because fellers who are wearing boots ought to wear shoes, and veezy verzy."

I noticed that he had a rope tied around his waist to hold up his pantaloons, but he had his excuse.

"If I wore galluses," he remarked, "I'd wear out at least four pairs a year, while this rope will wear for five. It leaves my shoulders free, there are no buckles or buttons to bother, and when I git hungry I give a yank, tighten her up and save a pile of pervishuns."

"Why do you button your vest clear to your chin?" I asked.

"To save shirts and collars," was his answer. "Such things are mere ornaments, if not unhealthy, and it takes up a pile of one's time to change shirts and put on clean collars. I figure that no feller can get out of one shirt and into another, and change collars, in less than twenty minutes. Twice a week is forty minutes lost. That's eighty minutes a month, or nine hundred and sixty minutes a year. Figure that I live fifty years, and how much time have I lost? My clothes set better, I feel nicer, and the old woman has no trouble about the washing or the buttons. Oh, I'm right down to figures, sir, and if you want to know why I ain't in the dry goods trade instead of blacking boots, I can make chalk marks here on the sidewalk which will lift your hair right up!"

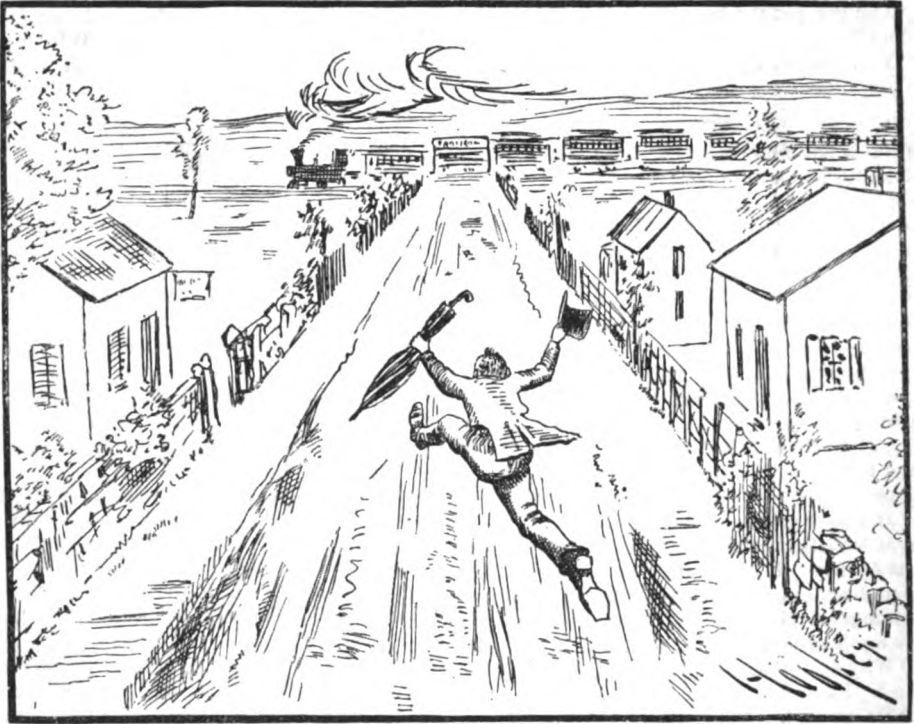
A country girl, several of whose sisters had married badly, was herself about to take a dose. "How dare you get married," asked a cousin of her, "after having before you the unfortunate example of your sisters?" "A fudge for the example of my sisters," exclaimed the girl with spirit; "I choose to make a trial for myself. Did you ever see a parcel of pigs running to a trough of hot swill? The first one sticks in his nose, gets it scalded, and then draws back and squeals. The second burns his nose, and stands squealing in the same manner. The third follows suit, and he squeals, too. But still it

makes no difference with those behind; but all in turn thrust in their noses just as if the first hadn't got burned or squealed at all. So it is with girls in regard to matrimony; and now with this I hope you are satisfied."

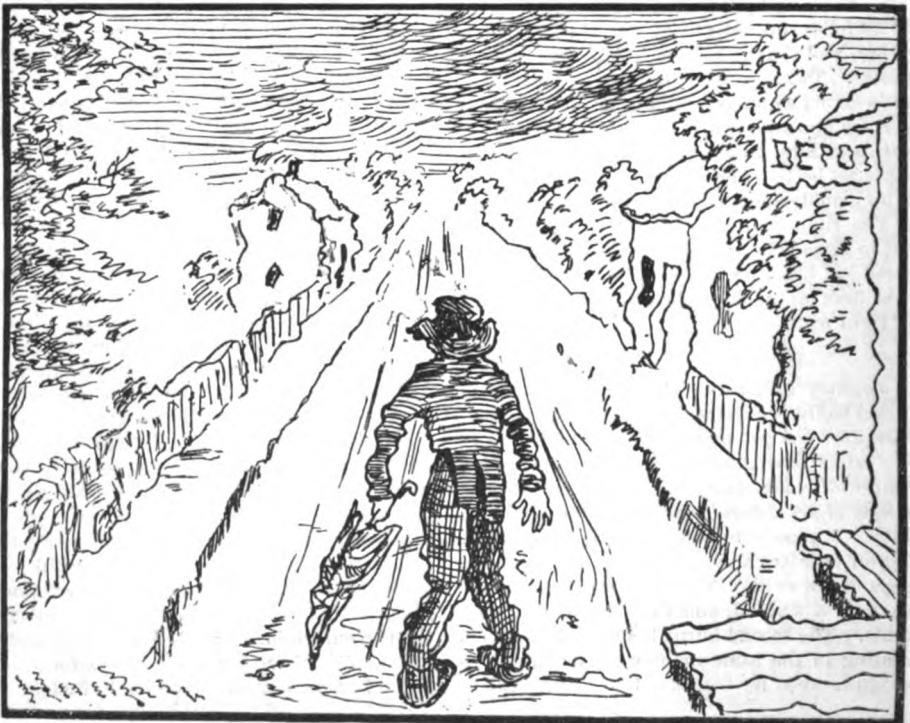
It takes a woman to find comfort in a railway car. See her come in, and deposit her bundles in one seat, and herself in another, take out a book, and, lolling back in a corner on a pile of wraps, proceed to enjoy herself. How calmly comfortable, how persistently placid she is! The putting-on of the brakes may jar her from head to foot; but, passively submissive to being shaken, she reads on undisturbed. The baby on the other side of the car may make its most plaintive appeals for sympathy and "soothing syrup;" she merely lifts her eyes a moment to gaze at the baby's mother, and goes on reading unruffled. When it grows dark, and the three lamps are lighted, she quietly puts away her book, snuggles down in the most graceful, cosey-looking style imaginable, and closing her eyes, drops off peacefully, properly asleep. The train may come to a halt at her destination with a jar and a jerk; she waits till it comes to a standstill; then she rises, and without fuss or flurry gathers her belongings, and with a dignified bearing passes out, placid and passive, undisturbed and unruffled, calm, cosey and comfortable to the last.

But a man! He comes in with a troubled air, drops into the first vacant seat, stows his baggage in one end, and himself in the other, pulls out a paper, and holds it upside down while he studies the back hair of the lady before him. When the baby begins its plaint, he fidgets, looks out of the window, then around the car, while the troubled expression deepens on his countenance, and his fingers beat a tattoo on the window-sill. Every time the train halts he hurries out on the platform as if he had urgent business with the brakeman, and comes sauntering in again with a depressed look, and his hands in his pockets, when the car starts. His newspaper is resumed, and from time to time the tattoo is heard. Finally he succumbs to fatigue, and with his hat pulled down over his eyes, and his head resting (?) on the back of the seat, he slumbers. How he snores! Heaven bless the man! what hard work sleeping seems to be with him. By and by the car stops with its usual jerk, and his hat falls over his nose, his neck gets an unpleasant wrench, and he starts to his feet with a dazed wretched look pitiful to see, grabs his overcoat and valise, and hurries out, in his haste bumping against every seat he passes, the personification of restlessness, wretchedness, *ennui*, dissatisfaction and discomfort. Poor fellow! Man woman's superior? Fudge!

FOURTH OF JULY.



EARLY MORNING.



LATE AT NIGHT.



BALLOU'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

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AUGUST, 1888.

WHOLE NUMBER 404.

LOVE IN A LOFT.

BY MARY STILWELL.

THE Captain was mending the sail of a schooner. It was spread out in brown, wrinkled folds, upon the floor of the sail-loft. He didn't think much of it, he said, because it was mended and patched. He was busy putting little round bits of tarred rope through holes worked in button-hole stitch at the edge of the sail.

He was a sail-maker now, though he used to make "v'yges" to the South Sea Islands, and had been to Greenland and the Black Sea. So when I found I was privileged to swing my hammock in the door of his sail-making establishment, (hardly to be called a loft, since it was a long black building, set on the ground, and so near the sea that the green waves almost touched the door-sills) I quickly availed myself of my indulgence, and watched the sea and the Captain alternately, and lay in wait for stories. What might not be expected from a sailor bold who had been from Greenland to the Black Sea? From out the door, which, daubed with patches of paint, in green, brown and red, stood wide open, I could see pass, as in a magic lantern, fishing-sloops coming up from the sea into the harbor, watch the cat-boats fly before the wind, and the graceful yachts daintily dipping about like birds.

"It is purty scenery," said the Captain, seeing my absorbed attention. "I have been round the world three times, and I like this 'ere best o' all. It's cur'us now," said he, pushing his big round spectacles back on his head, to which they were tied with a leather string, "it's cur'us now, how fond folks is o' comin' down here, and a-starin' at

the sea. I kinder like the look o't myself sometimes, when it's a-settlin' after a storm; but there's some folks as come and keep a-settin' here and a-starin' at it, when it's just as calm as a lookin'-glass; and they can't see nothing but the reflection of their own faces in it; like as not that's what they're lookin' for," chuckled the old fellow slyly, drawing down his spectacles to look at me through them to see if I agreed with him, and being assured of that, setting to work again, drawing his thread taut through the holes of the sail.

He is quite a character, is my Captain sail-maker,—a gentle, little dried-up old man, with gray curling hair, and keen gray eyes, full of Yankee intelligence. He sits at his work on a low bench, though more often upon the floor, tailor-fashion, and sews his sail with the aid of a thimble in the palm of his hand, cutting off his thread with a knife instead of scissors. Upright bobbins full of twine are stuck in holes at the end of his bench, and beside them are sharp wooden stilettoes with which to pierce the stiff duck of the sails. I watch him, as he deftly puts brass rings in the sail, rings through which a small rope runs like a gathering-string; watch him edge his sail neatly with rope sewed over and over, and see how nicely and in what workmanlike fashion he snaps his waxed thread as he brings it through with a jerk. Presently I ask him how much such a sail as that would cost? He thinks perhaps fifty-five dollars, because it has been patched and is dingy; what would a new sail—a mainsail—cost? Oh, maybe for a ship, two hundred and fifty. The sails for

a full-rigged ship would cost more than a thousand dollars. It depends upon the duck, you see.

"Now, this," said my Captain, getting up from the floor where he had been sitting, and dragging down some duck from a bench, "this is light, American duck, made in Lowell, and this heavy one," tugging at a ponderous roll, "is English, and as stiff as a board."

I feel of it, Yankee-like.

In the long, wide sail-loft a workbench runs along the whole side. Piles of duck, coils of old and new rope, smelling agreeably of tar and salt water, with bales of cordage, fill the other side of the wall. Half way down the middle of the room, a great iron box stove is suspended clear of the floor by stout iron rods, the funnel crossing the room just below the rafters. This arrangement allows the sails to be spread beneath the stove. A flight of rough wooden steps lead to an upper story, formerly partitioned into rooms, that were used by the Captain and his wife to live in before the queer little house was built near the sail-loft. Mrs. Captain had been too happy in her sail-loft room to accept the new house with alacrity, and so the Captain tore down the partition and dismantled the upper story in the loft, lest the memory of the old days should bar the door to the new, in his wife's thoughts.

She herself is the tidiest of cockney English women,—stout, healthy and wrinkled, and smiles a cheerful welcome to you from her black, beflowered lace cap.

The house belonging to the sail-loft is a tidy story-and-a-half cottage, set in a green field near the water. It is painted white, and has bright green blinds, but architecturally it follows the sea, and is built "accordin'." One long room runs the length of the dwelling, like a ship's cabin. This is the dining-room, furnished at one end with a "locker," or broad wooden shelf, on which those viands that are not consumed at one meal are displayed to invite appetite for the next. At the side entrance, fronting the sea, ladder-like stairs, each step two feet high, lead to sundry comfortable rooms, furnished with old-fashioned post bedsteads and immensely high mattresses—beds to be climbed into by the aid of the wooden chairs that are handy, and which are covered by quilts in tulip patterns, and red and blue diamonds. Another ladder, or box-step staircase, leads to the front door,—seldom used,—and you

can precipitate yourself easily from the top of the companionway, so to speak, as there are no balusters, directly into the cabin or parlor, ten feet by twelve.

This parlor is the delight and refreshment of a wearied mind accustomed to the commonplace furnishings of modern residences. An inventory of the things in it would absorb the attention for weeks. In the middle of the room hangs an ornament made of white raveled silk, like an elongated balloon; the window curtains are pink mosquito netting over green paper; there is a cuspidore filled with moss; five tidies lie on sofa and chairs; pasteboard corner-brackets with glit-paper baskets, a perforated black paper shaving-case, a pink and white card receiver, a plaster angel holding a shell, an immense cornucopia, another bracket with a little green shoe on it, are decorations that reach to the mantle-piece, under the shelf of which is a purple feather duster, a faded green silk watch-case, a white and blue bead watch-case with a silver watch in it, a tinsel shaving-paper case, a green and yellow embroidered bag full of red checker-berry drops, another watch-case of dark blue and white beads, a variegated pink paper case in slipper form, an advertising picture framed in willow sticks, a silver paper slipper, a jig-sawed bracket with perfume bottles on it, one huge worsted rose with buds and leaves on wire; all these things are suspended on the walls close together, as the pictures in the galleries of the Pitti palace.

In one corner of the parlor a square table stands, covered with a gay felt cloth. Upon this table is a lamp-shade upside down (on top of which is a pine-cone basket), a paper parrot, a terra-cotta cigar-stand, a little plaster Samuel asleep, a cup and saucer with "From your sweetheart" on it, nineteen ambrotypes in black cases, a religious book on the "Immortal Life" (little read), and one on the "Wrongs of Women," rest amicably side by side. I open the book on "Wrongs of Women" at these cheerful lines:—

"Oh 'tis a glorious boon to die,

This favor can't be prized too high."

I put it down again. I prefer to look at the glass case with a full-rigged ship in it, or the little glass ship in a bottle, or the case of shells; these being prizes brought home by the Captain from his foreign "v'yges."

But nobody thinks of sitting in the parlor. It is reserved wholly for "company."

Everybody sits in the cheerful, spotless kitchen, with its wide chintz-covered settee, its high wooden mantel and old-fashioned chairs and polished stove, in front of which purrs a comfortable tortoise-shell cat. In the pantry adjoining the kitchen, the door of which stands open, old English willow ware is arranged in wooden racks, and pewter platters bear them in countenance; while a tiny conservatory, full of bright scarlet and white geraniums in bloom, with a yellow canary piping away contentedly, makes the homely kitchen a delightful resting-place. Here the Captain smokes his pipe of an evening when sail-making hours are over; here Mrs. Captain kneads her dough for bread and cakes, on her well-scrubbed kneading-board, and here favored visitors find favor if they bring gossip or newspapers; exchanging modern gossip for stories of old times when the Captain and his wife "lived in hold Hengland, and kep' 'ouse in 'Ull."

Mrs. Captain had married her "'usband, Mr. Barberry," as she called him, some fifty years ago, and left her "Henglish 'ome," but she has never added her h's to her "HamERICAN 'appiness." I delight in her quaint speech, and beg her to regale me with it at meal-time, for I am at present the one solitary parlor-boarder. I like to hear the tales of her early life, and the good soul likes to tell them.

Some people enjoy hearing bands play during their meals; I prefer a single wind-instrument, blown by my Captain's wife; so when I sit down at my breakfast table which I beg to have placed by the door that opens out towards the sea, which door is fastened by a big wooden button,—a table daintily spread of a morning with raspberry pie, apple pie, custard pie, lemon pie, preserves and pickles, sour milk biscuit, hard-fried steak and little sugared cakes with caraway seeds, these complemented by a boiled egg and a piece of bread, which latter I eat, my Captain's wife, who never sits in my presence unless especially invited, comes and stands in the doorway, and entreats me to "heat 'earty."

Here now is my opportunity. "Tell me something to amuse me, dear Mrs. Barberry; tell me about the Captain and you, when you were young."

"Well, mum," said Mrs. Barberry, with a faint color rising in her withered old cheeks, and wiping her forehead with her

clean checked apron as she smiles, "you see I was a kind of an 'ousemaid in Hingland, mum. I was a-livin' in 'Ull, mum, hat a tavern—a very respectable one, too, mum; and there was a young man named Willyum, mum, an' he kinder shined sider me; and he and Mr. B. was friends, and had made a v'yge together, and so they was naturally together a good deal when they was to 'ome. Well, mum, Mr. Barberry he come off the v'yge to Greenland, and he come with Willyum to the house where I was 'ousemaid, mum, and I was a-cleanin' ov the grate,—you know they 'ave grates in Hengland, mum?" I said I had heard so.

"And they keeps of 'em very clean, mum. Well, mum, I was on my knees a-polishin', and o' course I couldn't leave horf because they came in, but I hoften used to say that me husband niver ud need run away from me on account of me dirty looks, mum, for I never looked so bad in me life! But they was very pleasant, and kep' on talkin' and laughin' to themselves, and I 'eard Mr. Barberry say, sez'e. 'That's a nice girl, I know.' And Willyum said I was; only Willyum didn't seem to say much about it then. Well, mum, Mr. B. used to come to the 'ouse very hoften, but I didn't take any notice of um, till one day he hasked me if I wouldn't like to go to the theatre at hevning. I said I should, if my missus was willin', and if Sara,—that's their daughter,—would go along with me; an' so Mr. B. he went straight hout and hasked the missus, and she agreed I might go; and then they all thought they'd go, too. So we all on us went to the theatre, but Willyum was kinder jealous-like, an' he said I was always makin' excuse when he hasked me, that me missus couldn't spare me, or something; but you see, mum, I couldn't 'elp it (deep sigh); I suppose it was to be, that I should like han HamERICAN better than me hown people, an cum away from hall me hown fambly, and me brothers tuk it very 'ard, mum! Well, mum, in Hengland maids allers get Sunday afternoon, and I 'ad told Mr. Barberry I'd go to walk wi' um, and I found Willyum was a-watchin' at the door; and so I jes' slipped out by another, and was a-walkin' along thinkin' to see Mr. Barberry, when Willyum happeared, and he stuck so close to me that I took another street and said he must hexcuse me, for I was going to see my sister who was sick, and I couldn't carry company. Is your hegg done too much, mum? Couldn't

ye heat some of the pie, mum? Well, in a few minutes who should come along but Mr. Barberry, and we hall three walked along. Mr. Barberry went into one o' thim little shops that they 'ave along the bridge o' 'Ull, mum, full o' cakes and sweets, and he bought me heverything,—more than I could manage, and Willyum somehow seemed to think he was not wanted, so he went 'ome; but—oh, mum, didn't I get the black looks from 'im that night! Well, mum, hafter awhile, me and Mr. Barberry was seriously engaged, and he was goin' one v'ye more to Greenland, and we 'oped it to be a prosperous one, mum, so as to set hus hup 'ousekeepin'. So it was; he was gone nine months, and w'en he came 'ome we was merried, and me mistriss and master gi' us a weddin' breakfast. Oh, it was a beautiful one, mum! We 'ad heverything to heat you can himagine! Hafter that, mum, we lived seven years in 'Ull before we come to Hamerica, an I broke my 'eart, mum, w'en I come!"

"That's very interesting, Mrs. Barberry. What became of William?" My Captain's wife hesitated a little, and stooped over to dust out the seat of a perfectly clean chair before she answered:—

"Well, mum, he was a very pretty man, was Willyum—tall and straight and pleasant-like, and I liked him for a friend, but—poor Willyum!—Well, mum, he had been a soldier, and he deserted, an' went on v'yses; he liked the free hair, mum, and he kept very still about his leavin' the army; but he was so foolish has to go up to Lunnon, mum, and ye know they find hout heverything there, and somebody saw 'im and recognized 'im, and I ham afeared 'e was punished, mum!"

"Was he shot, Mrs. Barberry?"

"Well, mum, they say they do shoot ums has deserts; but I never like to think about it, mum, for Willyum was a very fine young man, an' uncommon fond o' me!

"Yes, mum," continued the good woman, as I sat in melancholy reflection, trying to digest my "hegg" and this pitiful story:—

"Mr. B. 'as been hall that I could hever hask in a 'usband, and we've been 'appy; we 'ad a large family of children, mum, but they've hall gone. Some is dead,—some is merried—hall away from hus. We hadopted some twelve children, first and last, when hour own grew hup and went hout for themselves, mum."

"Adopted a dozen children, Mrs. Barberry! I never heard of such a thing in my life!"

"Well, not hall at once, mum," said she with a twinkle in her blue eyes; "ho no, but Mr. B. and me has been pretty fortunate for 'umble folks, and hour daughters got merried and went hoff, and hour sons wanted to go hoff to the Banks, and bothered hour lives hout by comin' and goin' hat hall times o' day and night, and so Mr. B. he jes told the last one he might stay away for good, and he giv 'um fifty dollars. He do come 'ome sometimes now, but he ain't very stiddy, 'e ain't."

"And the twelve orphans you took, Mrs. Barberry; what became of them?" asked I, thinking of the twelve baskets of fragments at a certain feast.

"Well, mum, the fisherman's children about 'ere are very poor and kinder miserable brought hup, and wen their mother dies, and their father runs hoff to the Banks or gets to be tipsy, mum, w'y there hain't nothin' to be done, but somebody must take care o' um; and it's generally the Captain and me. I'll tell ye about one ov 'em if you care to 'ear?"

"One Christmas night it was bitter cold, —all we could do to keep warm by the big stove,—when a boy came running in and sez Mr. Andy's house is all a-fire hover to Duck Hisland hopposite! And his 'air all stuck up on his 'ead, and he sweated awful—he was so scared. Me 'usband, Mr. Barberry, got some men as quick as iver 'e could, for seemed as if they niver could git a boat ready,—they was beached for the winter, or had a hole in 'um or something. At last they got started, and they rowed hover to the Hisland in a terrible wynd, and they found hall in a blaze,—'ouse and barns and heverything! They was only one 'ouse and fambly on that little Hisland, and they was farmer's folks. They 'ad seven critters, and them critters would keep a-comin' down into the fire and a-bellerin' so as the men couldn't manage ov 'em—except for the big dog. He seemed to sense the matter, and 'e drove the critters back; but they had hall to be killed hon the shore, mum, because they couldn't get 'em hoff in the boat, poor dumb beasts!"

"Only one poor cow was saved; you've seen her, mum, a-lookin' in at the winder so kind o' scared at ye, and trembling all over at a strange face, ain't ye? She never got

hover her fright o' that awful night, though we've kep' her and pet her and treat her good all we can. Well, mum, it was so cold that Christmas night that the water froze on the fire. And Mrs. Andy, that was the farmer's wife, and her nevy, and the men, they took refuge for the night in a 'ut built to shelter cattle, and though me 'usband, Mr. Barberry, and the men kep' hup a great fire, and covered the women with all the quilts and things they could find, the tail of Mr. Barberry's coat would scorch on the one side and freze on the t'other, where it was wet.

"Mis' Andy's cellar was full of beautiful cream and butter, milk and keags of heggs—hall spiled! About one o'clock in the morning they came across from the Hisland, and they was hall tuckered out, hall o' 'em, an' we was hall hup hexpecting o' 'em; and they come right here, men, women and children, and stayed the rest of the winter, a-sharin' with us w'at we had.

"It was 'ard, mum, all round, though we pitied them awful, but then w'en anybody 'ud get their work done up, and want to sit down comfortable-like, why there was poor Mis' Andy takin' on, and talkin' low as iver was; and you 'ad to try and comfort 'er as well as ye cud. We was feelin' bad, too, over the loss ov our putty little hoss, that died in the barn; me and me 'usband were hup with her hall night—but then our troubles was nothin' to 'ers! And when they got a place somewheres else—for Mr. Andy went as a gentleman's gardener, why then we took the little nevy and saw arter 'im. We sent 'im to school and paid for his clothes, and he was awful 'ard on 'em, too;—and when he got big enough he run away to sea and left hus—me and the Captain; and we thought kinder 'ard on't at first, but we 'ave to put up with heavy things in this world!"

"It was very good of you and your husband to help them through their trouble," said I, getting up from the table and following Mrs. Barberry out of the room to the door-step, where I sat down by the side of a huge pot of hydrangea in purple bloom. "I hope you had better luck in your other ventures?"

"Well, some o' 'um," said she, reservedly. "One of the little gells was sly, mum, and Mr. B. and me can't abide slyness. When she got big and run hoff to a factory we was glad o't. We gave away two or three of the littlest ones to city people who

wanted children to bring up, and some o' the wurst o' 'em died; and there's some o' 'em as merried, and allers remembered what me and the Captain done for 'em. W'en they 'as babies they allers send us their photographs w'en they is took."

I remembered what an astonishing number of fat, round-eyed babies there were in the pile of fly-blown photographs in the parlor.

"One o' our own girls was merried to a fine young man. He looked some like Willyum; they live over to the Neck, and hev a good farm and two nice little children. It's about time for 'em to be over 'ere a-visitin'. We've got one of our adopted sons of our own left. Did you mind that tall boy in the kitchen this mornin'? He's engaged to a pretty gell, though he's only eighteen years old; and he's very complest to me and the captain. We call him Belzebell. I suppose it's a kinder of a curcus name, for there was a painter-man,—he said he was—down here lately, and he kep' calling on him Belzebub, all the time. It used to make Belzebell mad. He hates to be called out o' his name!"

I didn't wonder he wanted to hold on to it, though it did not seem to suit the brown-faced, clear-eyed fellow I had seen. I should have relished hearing how he came by such a name, but some domestic duties now called off my Scheherazade, so I resumed my hammock in the sail-loft.

The tide is going out, leaving blotches of brown kelp along the shore; the sun lies hot on the crisp, slippery grass. I hear steps along the unstable line of plank boards laid over the cobble stones of the beach. Can it be a caller? Impossible; we don't have callers.

I watch for the approaching person, who proves to be a man, and who goes by without glancing toward the sail-loft. His back reminds me of someone; I can't think whom. How stupid of him not to look my way! then I should have known whether it was the same back or not. That is nonsense, however, for I remember now that it was Mr. Brillyantine's back he reminded me of; Mr. Paul Brillyantine, that artist who was in love with me one summer. I think we were engaged—it was ages ago; I didn't care for him much, and so we left off being engaged, but I have a sort of fancy he was heartbroken about it, however. Wouldn't it be odd if this man were he? Mrs. Bar-

berry said there was a "painter man" who wandered about down here, and called Belzebell "out of his name," and this may prove to be—pshaw! I haven't the faintest interest in Mr. Brillyantine; and his back had nothing very remarkable about it that I remember except stiffness. I'm sure I hope he is all nicely married by this time. Heigh-ho! I will think of something else; the flight of time is not an interesting subject.

How divine that floating cloud is! One end is a silvery film; then it broadens into a mass of lavender, and deepens into lilac, then into purple—just the fashionable shades. The air grows cooler. I will converse with the Captain for variety.

"Did you say you had been round the world three times, Captain?" I ask, propping myself on my fir-stuffed pillow.

"Well, yes," the Captain says.

He has been to the "East Inges, an' the South Sea Islands, an' to Greenland, an' Roosia, an' the Sea o' Azof."

"Purty good traveler, ain't I ben?"

I assent and keep silent awhile, reflecting on "Roosia and the Sea o' Azof," perhaps. What a contented mind one must have to settle down to stitching sails when one has been round the world three times! I revolve in my brain the question of whether the making of sails that will carry ships round the world is not an agreeable sedative to an active mind and a toilworn frame,—if an ancient mariner could choose any more fitting occupation for himself than one in which his reminiscences naturally follow his needle. I watch the Captain sitting sewing away and jerking his thread back and forth, with a monotony that is extremely soothing.

"What did you say? Somebody has just brought a letter for me? Oh, thank you, Captain!"

How extremely tiresome! I didn't know any of my friends knew I was here. I enjoy their society extremely when I am at home, and I also enjoy their absence extremely when I am away from home. I will open my letter. Somebody must be dead, for nobody could have the heart to be married in August, I am very sure. Oh, dear, dear me! what have I ever done that I should be drawn up in such a coil as this! Margaret Smith! Who is Margaret Smith? I don't know Margaret Smith. Why does she write to me, I wonder? Coming! and here! I cannot have her! I won't have

her, whoever she be! The Captain won't like it, neither will the Captain's wife; neither shall I. The Barberrys don't take boarders; they only took me because—oh, no matter why they took me! But what an extraordinary letter!

"There's nothing the matter, Captain; you needn't come. I was only thinking aloud."

I re-read my letter.

"HALEVILLE, August, 1887.

"*My dear friend.*—On receiving your pressing letter, begging me to join you at your sweet, summer symposium, I had many minds about it, but—I will come. I don't see how I can possibly leave John William and the baby—though, to be sure, the baby is four years old now, and John William thinks he is old enough himself to take care of his own affairs. But then men often think so, and of course they can't! John William, though he is my brother, and likes my housekeeping full as well as he did poor Lucy's (though he don't say so, of course), really doesn't know the first individual thing about housekeeping. He does not even see that I'm perfectly worn out by my domestic afflictions—that is, my cook and the gardener, John. My second-girl has left, because she couldn't stand the cook. I don't wonder at it. No more can I, only I have to. She is the slowest, stupidest, and most inefficient creature I ever saw, to say nothing of her having what she calls 'newerology in her head.' I haven't energy enough left to change her. John William says I 'bear the ills I have, rather than fly to others that I know not of'; but then John William is so original!

"John, the gardener, is always as dull as his own hoes, and this summer he has got the hay-fever, and is everlastingly hunting round the garden for some hidden bit of ragweed which he proposes to root out. He never finds it, of course, but goes sneezing about, nearly taking my head off, and jarring the whole piazza where I sit mending John William Phillip's trousers—when I am not scolding the cook. I never in all my life knew anybody who sneezed so much at once! and so loud! There he goes now! 'Akisheel! Akishool! Akisha! Akishum!' I declare, it's perfectly awful! It's so unreasonable of him to have the hay-fever! I don't believe Adam ever did. John William says it's a pre-Adamite vice. When I see

him sniffing at the big syringa bush that smells so strong of cucumbers, and ask him, 'John, what are you doing?' he puts on the most mournful expression and says, 'O marm, I was trying my smellers on these here posies!' If he can't smell cucumber he can't smell anything! I wouldn't care, if he would only stop sneezing, and—the result of it all is, I must go away. My nerves are upset!

"Your letter was so very kind, telling me of the dear old couple, the timid cow, the sea, and the sails; and—I suppose you haven't seen anything of a friend of mine, Mr. Brillyantine, the artist? though I remember now you did mention him in your letter.

"Heighho! I rather dread leaving John William. You would hardly believe how careless he is; and I'm very particular. I left him once before, and when I got back never did I see such a demoralized room as his was! I said, 'J-o-h-n W-i-l-l-i-a-m!' and pointed to the boots, and the mussed shirts, and soiled handkerchiefs, and towels, and old newspapers, and things all tumbled together in a heap; and what do you think he did? Just chucked me under the chin (John William can be slightly vulgar at times, like all men), and said something about the poet Herbert and drudgery divine, and sweeping a room to make the action fine. Really, I do think John William is peculiar at times! What has the poet Herbert to do with sweeping John William's room? That is the house-maid's business.

"But I shall leave him to his fate, and come down to Jefferson Point, where you are, for rest and recuperation. Now if I can make John William pack my trunk for me! But he has no more idea of clothes than Adam, and certainly would put my tulle hat at the very bottom of everything. What a happy woman Eve must have been before the fall, when fig-leaves were the style and no trouble to pick them! I've always envied her; I do have such awful times getting my gowns fitted.

"Can you meet me at the boat to-morrow? and how shall I know you? I imagine you are very tall, very stately, very charming! I'll look for you, sure; you are so sweet to ask me to come!

"Gratefully yours,

"MARGARET SMITH.

*"To Miss Martha Whitestone,
"Jefferson Point, Mt. Desert."*

I finish reading the letter. I have fallen back in my hammock, speechless, dumb-founded, helpless. What does it mean? this flippant letter from somebody I never heard of, full of domestic details that I never want to hear of. Am I expected to look after her?

"Captain," I gasp, "would you mind coming here a moment?"

The Captain slowly takes his thimble out of his palm, pushes up his spectacles, and looks over at me.

"Ye ain't sick nor nothin', are ye, Miss Whitestone? Why, I was jes' a-goin' to tell ye about them Esquimaux up to Greenland."

"Oh, this is worse than Esquimaux, Captain Barberry! Here is a letter from a Miss Smith, who says she is coming down by to-night's boat, and wants me to meet her and bring her over here to stay."

The Captain's face betrays no emotion. "Friend of yours? Well, me and Mis' Barberry will do what we can"—

"But I don't know her!" I say, sitting bolt upright in my hammock, with energy. "I haven't written her a letter, as she says I have, unless I write in my sleep. I don't know any Miss Smith, and I don't want her over here, anyway, intercepting the view!"

"Well, as to that," said Captain Barberry, "if she ain't very big she can't cut of the view. 'Twould take a pretty big woman to cut off the ocean! I suppose you'll want old Jim and the colt to take you over to the boat to-night."

"I won't go at all," said I, stiffly. "Let Miss Margaret Smith get here as best she can, if she must come. There's no room for her in the house; she can go to the hotel over there. Let her and Mr. Brillyantine manage it; I can't."

The Captain, having now ascertained that nothing was the matter with me except temper, had gone back to his sitting position on the floor, and resumed his thimble and his serene expression.

"About them Esquimaux," said he, taking up his twine and the thread of his discourse together; "they're cur'us kind o' folks. The women wear fur clothes like the men, but nothing under them, of course. They don't have shirts, nor petticoats, nor nothing, so when they bend themselves the bare skin kinder shows through the cracks. I brought my wife, Mrs. B., home a suit, but she didn't like to wear it very well; she

said it was kinder conspicuous; and so we sold it to a showman who was mousing round here once. Both the Esquimaux men and women have a fur tail to their jackets—the men have a square one and the women a pointed one, to tell them apart.”

The Captain drew out a new waxed thread at full length, and tried it on his knees before speaking.

“Always makes me kinder shiver to think on them—six months day and six months night up there; and they’re kinder lonesome folks, too. When they bury their dead they make a sort of cradle of stone and lay their dead in it and leave ’em there. When they lay them down they look up in the sky and mutter something. I’m sure I don’t know what, for they haven’t any religion that ever I heard of.

“I was up to Greenland one terrible cold winter before I was married, and we was on shore lookin’ for polar bears, and saw some native huts. We crept into them on our hands and knees, and there was nothin’ but dead bodies inside. The whole family lay in a row, dressed in their fur skins, in a circle round the ashes of the fire. Guess they starved or froze to death. ‘Twa’n’t a very pleasing sight,” said the Captain, sententiously. “There was quite a village of them all dead. Some of our men took the fur jackets off some of the poor critters, but I couldn’t. It wouldn’t have give me no pleasure to wear them.”

The Captain was silent. He now had finished his sewing, and taking one of the long, sharp stilettoes from the bench, began to punch holes in a bit of duck shaped like a triangle—some mysterious wind-catcher, doubtless.

A light breeze had arisen, and from out the open door of the sail-loft the yachts were seen coming into the harbor, the afternoon sun throwing across their sails the shadows of the ropes, like cobwebs, on a huge scale. I swing to and fro in my hammock, and watch the motion of the water under the increasing breeze. I have forgotten for the moment the coming event—the Miss Smith—that cast its shadow before. Presently sails appear on the distant water line; mackerel sloops scurrying around like a covey of white-winged sea-birds, one following another with wide open wings, until, coming to anchor, they nestle and fold their canvas pinions and range themselves in line. On shore only the subdued hum of

the bees and the grasshoppers come close to my ear, with the shrill calling of children from the hotel yonder. The breeze from the water has not yet touched the outlying fields of scanty grass, nor swept the black rocks along the shore; it is coming slowly. Small boats from the fishing vessels are coming ashore full of jolly young fellows, singing.

It must have been an hour since the Captain has spoken. I turn my head to see if he is still there, and find only a vacant bench. The sail, apparently, is finished, and the Captain has probably gone forth to milk the cow. I am alone in the sail-loft. Someone is certainly coming along that uneven plank walk from the hotel; somebody that wants to buy a sail, perhaps. I will negotiate; I know a good deal about sails. I turn my eyes in the direction of the footsteps, and see—Mr. Brillyantine!

Oh, if there is anything odious in life it is to have one’s old lover appear when one is in a hammock, and has to get out! If he is still your lover it’s no great matter how awkward you are; but when he isn’t, when you’ve rejected him, and he can’t bear you, and you can’t bear him, why—There, now, I am out, thank goodness!

My old lover looks just as he did—only a little more so. His back is as straight as it used to be. I inclined my head with elaborate courtesy.

“Mr. Brillyantine! I was not aware you were in the neighborhood. Have you been here long? Are you looking for Captain Barberry? I”——

Mr. Brillyantine is a blonde young man given to blushing. He is apparently stupefied by his encounter with Miss Whitestone. In reality he is not in the least so—it is his way.

“I beg your pardon, I was not looking for Captain Barberry at all. I was hoping, expecting to see, Miss Margaret Smith. Is she not here?”

“I think not. There is no one here but me, and I am not Miss Smith.”

“No; you are still Miss Whitestone? One of the most charming and amiable of women; you could not suppose that I could forget that, though it is so long since we met. Pardon me; I had somehow received the impression that my friend, Miss Margaret Smith, was to be here, in this charming seaside residence, or residences, for some time. I—I learned incidentally that you

were sojourning here, and I thought how delightful it must be for you two ladies to be together."

I clear my throat. I am confirmed in the wisdom of my former refusal to marry him. He can be guilty of falsehood!

"I have not the pleasure of knowing Miss Margaret Smith at all. I did receive a long and familiar letter, full of domestic details in which I am not interested, from a lady signing herself Smith, this morning. The writer asked me to meet her at the boat to-night; I thought she probably mistook me for somebody else—you, perhaps. But at any rate the boat is over-due now."

I take out my watch and turn its face to Mr. Brillyantine. The hands point at half-past five; the boat is due at five o'clock precisely.

"And you're not going to meet this young lady, my dear Miss Whitestone?" remarked my artist, gravely.

"Why should I go to meet her? I don't know her," I say, abruptly; and I color violently at the implication of neglect upon my part.

Has Mr. Brillyantine forgotten the time when everything I did was exactly right? To be sure I have forgotten that time myself, but then he has no right to.

I turn my back upon his rather lowering countenance, and seat myself on the sill of the loft door fronting the house and the grass fields. The sill is nearly on the level with the field, and as I look across I observe that our cow is placidly chewing her cud, and seems at ease in her mind. I wish I were. I see the Captain slowly making his way through the field with the milking-pail in his hand; the cow raises her head, stops chewing, and steadily gazes at him as he approaches her.

"Miss Whitestone."

The voice is behind me. I turn my head round toward Mr. Brillyantine, who is standing there with a deprecating expression that does not suit his handsome face. He certainly is a handsome man; it is not the kind of handsome that I particularly like, but it's handsome, all the same.

"Well, Mr. Brillyantine," I say.

Then I am stolidly silent. If he can explain matters, I am willing to listen, but really the situation is strained.

"Miss Whitestone! dear Miss Whitestone, if I may venture to address you so—I never can forget how—ahem! I throw

myself on your mercy. Miss Margaret Smith is unknown to you at this moment, it is true, but I hope she soon will be so no longer; for I think I have not presumed too much on your goodness of heart by writing her that she will find a friend, an old friend, in you—for my sake! I love her! I want to marry her! At her home her brother is always in the way. I have never had a chance to tell her how I—ahem!—I mean, dear Miss Whitestone, to say I learned accidentally that you, my old friend, were staying here, from Mrs. Barberry; and so I ventured to address a letter in your name to Miss Margaret Smith, begging her to come down here, and mentioning myself incidentally among the other—ah!—agreeable objects in the landscape—cows, the sail-loft, the soft sea, etc. I knew if she came, you would graciously play propriety, and so I—eh, am I forgiven for my little evasion?"

Mr. Brillyantine stops, and while I am vainly struggling with a feeling that less self-controlled persons might call rage, that temporarily obstructs my utterance, a quick rushing step speeds along the plank on the cobble-stones. A very pretty, fresh, rosy-cheeked, black-eyed girl appears, and suddenly darts into the sail-loft. The loft is a step down from the path, and her entrance has the result of precipitating her into the arms of Mr. Brillyantine with great force and a quick recoil.

I sit calmly observing the cow and the Captain, yet am conscious of the scene before me, and also conscious that the young lady's surprise at seeing me is greater than it is at seeing Mr. Brillyantine, when curiously enough she ought to expect to see *me*, and not Mr. Brillyantine! (I abhor duplicity! I thoroughly object to serving as a cat's-paw!)

My old lover recovers himself first, of course, and hastens to present Miss Smith to me:—

"Miss Whitestone, our esteemed friend, Miss Margaret Smith; allow me," with an air of cordial friendliness that is overwhelming—at least to me.

He is master of the situation. I bow and murmur something intended for greeting, while Miss Smith's eyes are turned in interrogation points toward the artist. Then she holds out her hand to me—very prettily, I must say—and thanks me for writing her such a sweet, friendly letter, begging her to come down to Jefferson Point.

"It made me feel like an old friend of yours; and you were so sweet; and how came you to think of it, when I never even heard of you before? And I wrote you such nonsense about John William and the gardener, John!" she chatters along quite easily.

Now I have never been used to lying. I believe some of my ancestors were related to General Washington, and I stiffen up morally. Somebody has lied, and I will not endorse it, even; so I say:—

"I certainly did not write you any letter, Miss Margaret Smith; whosoever has been guilty of writing one in my name has perpetrated rather a silly joke."

When I utter this Johnsonian sentence the young lady turns very red, and the artist looks very guilty.

"But the letter was signed with your name, and how could it be, unless you wrote it?" said she.

"Please to forgive me, Margaret! I wrote it. Please forgive me, Miss Whitestone!" burst in the perfidious Brillyantine. "I did, Miss Smith, I did! I will confess it now with humiliation and tears, if tears are necessary. I was dying to see you again,—to be able to talk freely to you; to sit on the rocks with you; to—to endeavor to persuade you that I—well, that I really wasn't such an ass as to suppose you could care for me—no, I don't mean that!—but somehow I got the impression that your brother didn't like me, and I thought if I could see you by yourself, down here, you know—but I didn't intend—yes, I will say it this very minute—I love you! I did not intend telling you so in a sail-loft, and in the presence of Miss Whitestone—who once did me the honor to reject me,—oh, dear! I don't mean that exactly,—but now I have told you I will repeat it. I do love you with all my soul, Margaret! It's all wrong—the way I took to get you here—I confess; but I knew Miss Whitestone, and I wrote that letter to you in her name, so I could see you comfortably; but—I—I don't wonder that Miss Whitestone is laughing. I should think she would! It is very kind of her to laugh; and I don't mind your laughing, either. It is very good of you, I'm sure. I can't help laughing myself! Ha! ha! ha!"

Three distinct peals of laughter resound through the sail-loft. I laugh hysterically; Miss Smith laughs with an air of "I can't

help it;" Mr. Brillyantine laughs confusedly at first, then confidently.

"He who laughs wins!" Please mayn't I call you 'Margaret, dear Margaret'? Why not let us do something out of the common line, my Margaret? Accept me as your lover now—here in this sail-loft—and let us hope Miss Whitestone will be friendly enough toward us to mark this happy day, if we ask her—eh?"

Miss Margaret Smith looks extremely happy, and murmurs, "What will John William say?"

I see Captain Barberry appearing at the sail-loft door, with a pail of foaming milk and a tin dipper.

"Mis' B., my wife," he says, "is sorry that there ain't room for anybody else in this house—we ain't much in the way of boarders—but if you was a-goin' to stop long, I'll show ye the way to the hotel just opposite. Would ye like a drink o' milk?"

I accept the Captain's offer, and as I raise the dipper to my lips, I see Mr. Brillyantine bend over Miss Smith's little gloved hand.

"Is it to be, or not to be, Margaret? That is the question."

"Well, yes, I suppose so; but what will John William Phillip do? and John William himself?"

"We will speedily return, my love, and see. It is to be hoped that he will not sneeze at me, like your unfortunate gardener!"

The artist raises the gloved hand to his lips. It is apparently time to finish my milk. I put down the cup and say:—

"Shall I go with you to the hotel, if you are quite ready? Mr. Brillyantine, I will forgive you, now I see Miss Smith—though I do not approve of that letter—forgery!"

"Ah, dear Miss Whitestone, neither do I, in the least! I will never do it again in my life, never! Dear Margaret, you don't know how grateful and happy!"

The creaking planks of the rough walk bend as we step on them to go to the hotel.

Captain Barberry sets down his milk-pail and watches us out of sight.

Before long I return and resume my place in the hammock; I hear the Captain's voice saying:—

"Did I ever tell you how me an' Mis' Barberry, my wife, saw Queen Victoria crowned in England? Well, not exactly crowned, neither; but we saw the proces-

sion, and the houses covered with flowers and flags, and the coaches; and we saw Her Majesty, too. Oh my, what a change! Such a pretty girl as she was! Was them the friends you was expectin', Miss White-stone? Very pretty girl; reminded me some o' Her Majesty when she was young!"

"Did the gentleman remind you of the Prince Consort, too?" said I, rather sharply.

"Well, there's gettin' to be quite a stiff breeze along shore," said my Captain, clearing his throat. "I guess some of them sloops better be takin' in sail."

I retire to the house, and climbing up the steep stairs by successive jerks, I regain my room and throw myself on my bed with the variegated quilt.

I endeavor to straighten out in my mind the confusion that reigns supreme there. Am I a victim of circumstance, or am I not? I am beginning to see that I am the victim of Mr. Brillyantine's affection for Miss Smith. I have not the slightest objection to his affection for Miss Smith. She is a very pretty young woman, as the Captain says.

I have never seen Queen Victoria in her palmy days,—in fact, I have never seen her,—but I am willing to believe Miss Margaret Smith resembles Her Majesty. Only why should I, who am so peacefully enjoying myself at the ocean side, be compelled to serve as cat's-paw? I decidedly object to it; but what can I do?" The thing is done, well done, and apparently done quickly. There's nothing more to be said on the subject.

I wonder what John William, her brother,

will say to this performance! I wonder what kind of a man John William is, anyhow. I wonder if I should like him. I rather think I should! He must be very different from Mr. Brillyantine. Who will look after little John William Phillip's well-being? Heighho! I hope Mr. Brillyantine and Margaret—but—oh, yes, come in, Mrs. Barberry. Did you want me for anything?

"Ho no, me dear! honly I 'eard ye comin' kinder 'eavy hup the stairs, and the Captain, Mr. Barberry, said ye was kinder hupset with some friends of yours. 'E thought one of 'em looked like that painter-man that used to call Belzy hout of 'is name, but 'e wa'n't sure; hand I thought I'd jest come hup hand see after ye a bit."

I bury my head in the good, friendly woman's ample bosom, and give way to a series of hysterical sobs. What about, I'm sure I don't know; there isn't anything the matter with me, only I do hate tricks!

"There, there! now don't hever ye mind, whatever it is! It's all gone by, and warritin' just spiles your eyes, and don't do no kind of good. Me 'usband and me is goin' for a sail in the Hemma, now the wind is right, afore it gets dark, and you jest come, too; the breeze will dry hup them tears and smooth hout them tempers, and we'll go over to Duck Hisland and see where the fire was when we saved the cow. Belzebel owns the Hemma, and he'd go, too, honly 'e hain't to 'ome now. 'E's hout a-haying for some folks hover to the Hisland. The Captain, Mr. Barberry, 'ill be real pleased to have ye along, hand so shell I."

HOW THE CORN GREW.

BY GEORGE H. COOMER.

"BLESS me! isn't it warm?" exclaimed Aunt Margaret, fanning her handkerchief to the discomfort of sundry winged insects trying to effect a lodgment on her rather fine-looking nose; for Aunt Margaret had been very handsome in her youthful days, and was still remarkably fair; her nasal organ being just such a member as infallibly belongs to people whom nature seems to have created under a written contract. She had still a sweet-looking mouth, and its even rows of teeth reminded me of a

small sunflower broken in two before its seeds have lost their whiteness. So much for Aunt Margaret.

"It will be an uncomfortable night," she continued; "and of all things I object to hot nights, when the little barbed particles that have all day been taking possession of one are stealing their way out against the grain. I can endure the flood-tide of heat, but I do protest against the ebb!"

"Never mind," remarked Cousin John, "it will be a great night for corn-growing."

Ours grew four inches last night, to say the least."

"Four inches!" cried little Charlie, who went to Miss Primrose's school, and tormented all the household with fractions; "that's sixteen-forty-eighths of a foot—Miss Primrose says so; you never ought to say inches."

"Well," continued John, "I heard it snap as if every stalk was trying to take the lead of the family. Corn keeps awake all night, you know."

"And so do I," laughed Aunt Margaret, "such nights as these; though from a different cause, possibly. I suppose the corn is not so sensitive to mosquito bites as I am; besides, I fight too fierce a battle with the heat to allow of my growing very fast; then there is always an army with trumpets above my head, every little villain encouraging his file-leader to 'pitch in,' because I am so far gone that I cannot hurt them—at least, they think so. But speaking of corn-growing reminds me of a 'little story.' You know I was 'brought up,' as the saying is, at Uncle Raymond's. Your mother knows just what kind of a man Uncle Raymond was; don't you, Hannah?"

"Yes," said mother, "the laziest man alive. They did say he could never keep a whole pair of pants, because when he went sauntering about, if he came to the top of a hill, rather than walk to the bottom he would sit down and slide! You know lazy people take the most pains, and he would undergo all the labor of getting up for the sake of the slide down!"

"I would have liked to witness that operation, it was so characteristic," said Aunt Margaret, with a merry light in her chestnut-colored eyes; "but I have seen him sit in a rocking-chair to thresh barley. What a figure he cut, I declare! sitting in his chair on the barn floor, in danger of pounding his own head off!"

"And you know, Margaret," said mother, "how he would sit on a cold winter's evening, with the snow blowing over his house as thick as ever the ashes did over Pompeii, burning the last stick of wood that he had out of the swamp, laughing, talking, and drinking cider, as unconsciously as if he had piles of fuel at the door."

"Yes," said Aunt Margaret, "and the next morning, when fairly driven to bestir himself, he would shoulder his axe, wallow through the snow-drifts to the woods, and

bring us a stick or two on his shoulder. He had fifty acres of timber, but never provided wood while there was any warmth left in the ashes. You know how Aunt Raymond used to scold! but, lor!"

"Anything but a slack man!" said mother.

"Well, as I was saying," resumed Aunt Margaret, "I was brought up there. Uncle Raymond was always kind to me; he never was unkind to anyone. He would say 'yes' to all my propositions, because the saying 'no' would have involved the necessity of some explanation which he was too lazy to afford."

"Fannie Raymond and I were of the same age, and at sixteen we began to think ourselves entitled to beaux like other girls. Young men assumed the usual market value in our eyes; yet we affected fastidiousness. We made fun of Bill Watkins, ostensibly because he wore long hair, but really because he went home with Ruth Ryder instead of us, one dark Sunday evening from church. But the poor fellow was frightened enough, as it was—having to go home with a girl—so we ought to have pitied him. We ridiculed Tom Collins for his big feet, yet either of us would have jumped to get him, feet and all. And we laughed about Dan Weaver because he was so bashful. I remember his coming for a pair of overshoes that his mother had left at our house. He was overwhelmed by our presence, and so terribly confused! 'These are those, are they not?' said he, taking up the articles, and making a desperate attempt at refined English."

"'Yes,' said Fannie, 'them's um.'"

"To a bashful swain, a maid of sixteen is a dreadful creature; and I suppose poor Dan Weaver tormented himself for many a day with thinking what he might have said and didn't."

"One day, in the hottest part of summer, we heard that Julia Walker was to have a party. We were invited. Of course no beaux came to escort us; they would have been scared at the idea. Julia Walker lived about a mile off, away across the fields, and we started before sunset."

"You know all about this going across lots. Here was a stone wall, there a pair of bars; here a huckleberry lot, and there a field of corn; here an old, white-faced bay horse, there a 'cow with crumpled horns,' in the act of lying down under a great button-wood, and heaving a deep breath of satisfaction, as her body came plump upon

the ground. Then there were broad-horned oxen, fighting the flies—Phillip, of Mount Hope, kept his powder in just such a horn as these noble brutes might have furnished; and looking at them, I thought of Annawan's present to Captain Church,"—said aunt, parenthetically.

"As we neared the house, a great yellow dog barked at us, as we climbed upon a wall overhung with quince bushes, scattering a score or two of shanghais, ducks and turkeys, hardly more scared than ourselves. Presently we heard Julia's voice calling 'Banquo!' She ran towards us with a ringing laugh, the poultry following at her heels, and the great dog shaking his ears and capering all around her.

"Evening came, and with it numerous belles and beaux. How queerly the country lads had primmed up for the occasion! looking in their ill-fitting 'store clothes,' like wooden men. Women dress by instinct; but a man knows nothing about the use of clothes."

"Why, Aunt Margaret!"

"It is the truth. A country beau will get into his Sunday coat as he would into a hollow log; and it sets about as well on him; but a woman's dress is a part of herself.

"Well, we danced, played, and of course, flirted. The youngest water-fowl could swim, and we could flirt. Some of the girls were romps; others were mincing creatures, whom the boys were at first afraid of; for man is little skilled in woman's nature, and does not like risking much until he has drawn the enemy's fire. The most prim little miss of all was Clara Harper. She looked with disdain upon most of the farmers' sons, because her father kept a grocery, and sold molasses. One of our amusements consisted in our trying to guess what article in the room was indicated by an initial which one of the party might give; and in one instance Miss Clara gave W. K. We guessed in vain, and upon our giving it up, Clara informed us that W. K. stood for window curtain!

"But we had been charged to return early; and now came an hour of trial. The girls flitting about in quest of sundry light articles of dress, and whispering smart things to each other, controlled their fluttering spirits better than did the boys theirs. The latter stood trembling and nervous. It is hard to wait inactively for danger. Of all human beings the young male of the human

species is most awkward in making approaches to the female. In one way and another, however, we all secured escorts, Bill Rogers shying off with Emily Watson, and walking sideways, as if he feared somebody was going to kick him, and Jack Archer and Tom Morris coming with Fannie and me.

"We set out across lots, and had accomplished half the distance home, before Tom ventured to ask if I would accept his arm; but we could not keep step, and as the path was uneven, our shoulders knocked together like two corks in a wash-tub. Fannie's beau was not so valiant. He went stumbling along about six feet from her. He had shown much fortitude at the party, but was unequal to this new ordeal. It shook his courage—away out doors with a girl, and nothing to say!

"Having crossed Uncle Raymond's pasture, we came to the corn-field adjoining the house, and our escort were gallantly letting down the bars, when a shrill scream from Fannie startled us; and looking off to the right, close by the pasture wall, we saw the most horrid object that you can imagine. It looked like a gigantic man, with an immensely long face; and I thought it had great wings like something in 'Pilgrim's Progress.'

"Our beaux were no longer the awkward creatures they had been; and Tom Morris ran so violently as to hit himself with his heels, which frightened him almost to death. "'There comes a brickbat!' he bellowed, as he fled like the 'wind-swift Cupid.' Fannie and I followed with the fleetness of rabbits; stumbling over corn-hills, getting blows across the face from the great stalks, and feeling as if a hand of ice was ready to clutch us by the shoulder. Our 'protectors,' reaching the edge of the field, darted at full run for their homes, while we fled to our chamber.

"It was the warmest night of the whole summer, and between heat, exertion and fright, it seemed to me that there would be little remaining of us by morning. For a good while we lay and talked about the apparition, but at length fell asleep. Uncle and Aunt Raymond occupied an adjoining room, and about daybreak we were awakened by hearing them talking rather earnestly with each other.

"'There, James,' we heard Aunt Raymond say, 'don't you hear it? Something's in the corn. Do get up and see!'

"Oh, fudge!" he answered, "it's only the corn growing. I tell you it always snaps so in hot weather. There, do you hear that? It jumped half an inch then. That will be stout corn if this weather holds on."

"Fannie and I heard it too—'snap, snap, snap!—and thought of the spectre in the pasture. Was he indeed coming? We could imagine him striding through the corn, his fearful head overtopping the tallest spindles. We lay a moment trembling, and then heard Uncle Raymond commence snoring."

"The corn snapped louder than ever."

"I tell you, James, there's something in that corn!" persisted aunt; and we could hear her punch him with her elbow—"wake up! wake up!"

"Uncle yawned, and spoke impatiently: 'What, would you have me get up at midnight to see the corn grow? I can hear it; that's enough. When corn snaps like that, farmers can afford to sleep. Do keep quiet!'"

"Midnight, indeed! its broad daylight," returned aunt, "and I'm sure there's something in the corn, too. Well, if he ain't sound asleep again! Fannie!"

"What, ma?"

"Did you and Margaret put up the corn-field bars when you came through last evening?"

"No, ma; we saw something that frightened us, and ran as fast as we could."

"Aunt Raymond's bed gave one prodigious creak, and then her feet struck the floor. Slipping on her dress and shoes, she ran down-stairs and into the yard."

"Patrick! Patrick!" we heard her call, under the hired man's window.

"Sure, an' what is it, mum?"

"There's a whole herd of cattle in the corn; come down, quick!"

"An' d'ye tell me so! Indade, mum, an' I'll be wid ye!" and down went Pat, his hair looking like a birch broom. We girls, as some atonement for our great guilt, joined in the chase, and there was a general uproar.

"Who! whooroosh! out wid yez, yer thrampin' sons iv the devill!" shouted Pat, as the herd went crashing through the corn. There were four oxen, seven cows, nine young cattle and the old white-faced horse, who, throwing up his head with a long corn-stalk in his mouth, started at a trot for the bars, followed by his twenty companions.

"We had the curiosity to approach the pasture, in quest of the apparition. There was nothing upon the spot which could have caused our fright, and we were as much perplexed as ever."

"Faix, thin, an' it must have been the ould divil himself," suggested Patrick, when he had heard our story. "He knowed ye would lave down the bars wid the fright, an' thin he could dhrive the cattile into the corrun!"

"But this hypothesis seemed hardly reasonable, since the devil could have let down the bars for himself. So we returned to the house as wise as we were before. Uncle Raymond did not take the loss of his corn much to heart. He remarked that there would be less to harvest, a saying which aside from its undeniable truth, had, from his lips, a peculiar significance. His heaven was a place where there is nothing to do."

"The adventure of that night proved of incalculable advantage to our rustic beaux, giving them material for conversation; and when next we met, the 'weather' was held only as a reserve corps. They had had a subject before which their timidity in our presence fled away; and though a little ashamed of their cowardice, they felt relief in the thought that they had seen something of which they were more afraid than of us."

"But, Aunt Margaret, what was it that frightened you? Did you ever know?"

"Oh, I liked to have forgotten. Well, one day in huckleberry-time we went out in the pasture. Old Billy, the white-faced horse, was lying down behind some trees. On seeing us he started up sitting upon his haunches, like a dog, and seeming taller than a man. I have since observed that horses of 'a certain age' frequently get in this position; but Billy looked absolutely frightful, and in a moment I saw how the old fellow had duped us on that unfortunate night. In this position, seen by moonlight, so erect, with ears pointing skyward, like horns, he must have looked like anything but a horse."

"But I mean!—whew! how warm it is getting! And these wretched mosquitos! How is any one to sleep? If your corn don't grow another four inches to-night, John, or sixteen forty-eighths of a foot, as Charlie would say, it never will!" concluded Aunt Margaret, with one of her gleeful smiles.

RALPH SINGLETON'S PROTEGE.

BY MATTHEW S. VINTON.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ONCE more, and for the last time, let us go back with Julia, into the filthy alley again. It is the same as ever—dry, dusty and filthy. Above it the sky seems dim and shadowy; the air which passes through it is, as it always has been, sickening and depressing.

The first question Julia asked, as she came upon a ragged little urchin playing upon the broken stones at its entrance, was if old Suke still lived there.

"Yis, she do-es," was the drawling answer, given without looking up.

That was enough. Glancing at the door where Jack had once lived, and shuddering, as she saw in the distance a group gathered about the place that had once served as her home, she went up the rickety, wooden steps that still kept station before Suke's miserable dwelling. Her loud rap upon the inner door was answered by Suke herself, the same in looks and appearance that she had seen years before.

"What is it? toot!" she asked, suspiciously.

"I want to see you and speak with you, for a few moments," was the smiling answer.

"Toot! Come in then, with your fine feathers; though, Lord knows, it is no place for ladies."

"It is all very well," Julia answered. "But come here, please look into my face, and see if you ever saw one that resembled it?"

Suke did as she was bidden. After a moment's serious thought, she cried out, bringing her hands together. "It is the crow! Lord bless me, if it isn't the crow! the crow!" she cried, catching her by the arm, and drawing her to a seat. "Toot! toot! toot! the crow!"

"Are you sure?"

"Yes; only you've grown to be a lady. Toot! Where's the lily—and where's good Jackie?"

Julia informed her, and in turn inquired for Old Israel and mammy.

"Toot! just the same as ever, dog and

all;" answered Suke, keeping her eyes fixed on Julia's face. "S'pose they'd know ye?"

"I wouldn't like to try it," answered Julia. "I don't care to lodge under your bed again, for them."

"Toot! Guess not! the crow doesn't like that. Jackie didn't, either. Toot! but he had to come to it, though. Old Suke knew, she did."

"Yes, yes, she knew, indeed!" answered Julia.

"Does the crow remember anything that old Suke told her? And would she like to hear, now? Toot; old Suke knows. Do you want her to tell you?"

"Yes, oh, yes!"

"But what'll the crow give? Does she want to see inside of the box, again?"

How natural those words sounded to her. Looking down upon her clothes she more than half expected to find them ragged and filthy as they had once been. "Yes, Sukie, it is the box that I want. Will you give it to me?"

"Toot! For money? yes."

"Sharp as ever," thought Julia, laughing. "You shall have money," she said. "A large sum of it, if you will tell all you know about me."

"Toot! the crow isn't quite lady enough," was the answer. "Old Suke knows. But did you say you would give me money? Toot! then I'll tell."

"Yes, money; only tell me quick, for I have but little time to lose. Tell me—for you say you know—is Mammy Israel my mother, and is Old Israel my own father?"

"Toot! toot! Money first, the tell afterwards," said Suke, archly.

Julia placed a roll of bills in her hand. "There! be quick!" she said, nervously.

"Yes, but let me see how much there is? Toot. Five—two—three—ten! Twenty dollars! Toot. Good for old Suke."

"Tell me, then," pleaded Julia, just as she had done years before.

"Toot! yes! but couldn't you give me another ten? Suke's old—she needs it, and she likes it, too!" she added.

"Yes, another ten; anything, so you will not keep me long," answered Julia.

"Thirty, now. Toot!" said Suke, taking the extra ten. "Now what shall I tell you?"

"All that you know about me."

"Toot, about old daddy and mammy, then? Toot! you weren't never theirs, more than you was mine. You had a lady mother."

"Did I? Oh, tell me all about her, in Heaven's name! Was she beautiful?"

"Toot! Can't tell—never see her."

"How did you know that my mother was a lady, then? Who said so?"

"I said so!" answered Suke, sharply. "You were born in a big house; you were stealed from a big house; and you wore clothes fixed up by some nice hand."

Julia's eyes filled with tears. "Go on," she said; "tell me all without waiting to be asked."

"Toot! couldn't I have another bill?"

Julia gave her another without a word, and she began again.

"Toot! they stole you one day and run off with you; the house where you lived was large; there was flowers and trees all around it. It had ponds, too! Toot, wasn't it nice? But it was a long way from here, Suke knows; she's seen it. Toot! Suke wasn't much lame, then; and so she was round!"

"Were you with them when they took me?"

"Toot! no. But they told me about it. They brought you home, one night. You wore a little white dress, all fixed off, round the neck. Toot! What do you think I did that night while they were asleep?"

Julia shook her head. "Well, I tore the waist off from the little dress and hid it," she said, triumphantly.

"Is that what you have in the little box? Oh, in the name of heaven, tell me?"

"Toot. I've got something in the box, but 'twill take money to buy it."

"I have money."

"Toot! yes. That's good. How much will you give me?"

"Fifty dollars, if you'll give it to me, quick, I am in such a hurry. Don't make me wait a moment."

"Fifty dollars—good! I'll do it. How I hate old daddy and mammy. They let my baby starve."

"Yes, poor baby," said Julia, mechanically. "But the box, Sukie?"

"The box; Suke knows. You will give me fifty dollars for it?"

"Fifty dollars," repeated Julia.

Suke hopped along to the board, beneath which her treasures were hidden. "Don't look, don't turn your head this way," she said, stooping down.

"No, no; only hurry."

Julia was as impatient, now, as she had been years before when pleading with Suke. She remembered it herself as she sat there, trying to urge her forward. It seemed a long time before she came before her with the little box, the contents of which she so desired.

"Look, now, crow," Suke said. "Here is the box; now give me the fifty dollars? Toot! the fifty dollars. Give me that first?"

"Do not deceive me!" said Julia, counting out the money and placing it in her hand. "This is no time for trifling."

Suke nodded her odd little head in assent; then after she had counted her treasures, she held the box tightly with one hand while she smoothed it caressingly with the other.

"Old Suke has had it for years. She knew well enough that the time would come. She felt it in her old bones years ago. But she helped the crow away; and that was worth a great deal to her. How they swore and cursed, then! how she laughed at them, all the time! Toot! they let her baby starve. Old Suke never forgets; toot! never forgets."

"But the box," said Julia.

"Yes, I know it is yours, now; but I've had it for years. I've been waiting for this time to come. Let me open it for you; there, so, this way."

She pushed the cover aside, and Julia saw, what her eager eyes had so longed to see—the beautifully embroidered waist, which she had worn years before.

"How thankful! how very thankful I am!" she said, in a low, fervent tone, taking it in her hands, and resting her cheek against it. "How happy I am. See the wreat hof shells; see, Sukie, the tiny letters, F. S."

"Toot!" said Suke.

"There is another one just like this," she went on, while Suke looked wonderingly at her. "Another like this—so very like it—the same dainty wreath of embroidery about the neck and sleeves; the same delicate work, and, thank God! wrought by the same hands the hands of my mother!"

"Toot! Where is she? What do you know about it, crow? Have you seen her?"

Do you know your father? Toot! Guess not."

"My mother is dead; I have been in my father's house since I left Old Israel. It is his money that purchases this treasure."

"Toot!" exclaimed Suke, her eyes widening. "Didn't get enough for it, then. Toot! not enough. Want more."

"Tell me more and you shall have more," answered Julia, smiling.

"Yes toot! yes. They stole you and brought you to a city, far off, You cried hard for ever so long after you came. They told me where they got you—in a big house. I had seen it many times, myself. The folks that lived in it were proud, and had lots of money. Old daddy brought you to me 'cause you cried so the first night that you came. He did not know that old Suke hated him, he did not think that she remembered. I got you to sleep, I stole the waist of the pretty dress you wore. I knew what I was about, I did. I knew that it would tell a story, sometime, but I wanted to wait. They swore and cursed when they found it was gone. Toot! They couldn't help themselves. Old Suke was too wide awake for them. Toot, she always has been. They didn't stay in that city only one day, before they started for this place. It was a long time before they ventured to take you into the street. They were afraid—terribly afraid."

"Did you come with them? Why didn't you tell my father, then? It would have saved so much trouble."

"No, no; old Suke knew better than that; she felt like waiting until you were big enough to fetch 'em in money; that was the time that they hated to lose you; and that was the time that they *did* lose you, though. I followed them here on purpose to watch you. I knew how it would all come out. Toot! I have felt it in my bones for years."

"But," said Julia, "where did you think I was all this time? Did you expect to see me, again?"

"Toot! I tell you old Suke *knew*! She knew how it was coming out. Nothing in the world, or over it, or under it can cheat her. Old Suke knows."

Julia smiled at the old woman's temerity. "You don't believe it!" whined Suke, shaking her head. "The lily always believed everything I said, the lily did."

"Well, well," Julia answered, rising. "I will bring her here to see you before long;

and she shall have a chance to believe you again."

"Toot; that's good. Old Suke likes the lily; and she likes the crow, too. But is the crow going without giving her more money?"

Julia satisfied her on that point, and then turned towards the door. Just as she did so, Old Israel came blustering in at the door. An icy chill crept over her; while old Suke looked from one to the other, as if wondering whether or not there would be a collision between them.

"Oh, a lady!" smirked the old man, taking off his bad, shockingly bad hat, and bowing.

"Yes, but she don't care about looking at you, much!" answered Suke, sharply.

He looked steadily into Julia's face, as Suke said this. An expression of wonder passed over his countenance. "Who are you?" he asked in a low, rough voice, going closely to her side.

Julia's eyes kindled. She was not afraid, then. "I am Florence Singleton," she replied.

He turned his eyes a moment from her face. "You look—like—like"—

"The little girl that you stole," she said, interrupting him.

The man cowered. "Like Jig," he found voice to say.

"Yes, and I am she! the very Jig that you took from her home, to lead about in the street, and to beat about in your miserable den, when she raised her voice against your cruelty. The very same; and now, what have you to say about it?"

"You are mine!" he growled; "my own—you stole my money."

"Be careful; I would not have touched a cent of yours, to keep me from starving. I am going to be merciful with you. I could bring a terrible punishment upon your head, if I cared to do so."

"Do it—do it!" piped up Suke.

"Old hag!" muttered Israel, turning towards the door.

"You let my baby starve, and I curse you! curse you! curse you!" she screamed, clenching her hard hands together. "Stop, hear me. I'm not afraid. It was I who stole your money; it was I who helped Jig away; toot! and I who hid Jack from your clutches. Toot! and I, old Suke, can put you in jail, if you open your black mouth to say a word. Now out of my room—out of

it;" she cried, shaking her fists in his ashen face.

"D—n ye!" he growled, "d—n you—you miserable she-tiger!"

"Out of my house!" cried Suke. "You shall go to jail. The crow can put you in, if I don't—leave!"

He went out at the door letting a volley of oaths from his lips as he did so.

"Aren't you afraid, Suke?" Julia asked.

"Toot! not I. But you had better go, now. He may be back again. I must have my door locked. If you want old Suke to tell anything more, come again; bring the lily, too! and bring good Jackie Farley. Good-by."

She hurried Julia into the alley, and locked the door after her. "Money—money!" she said, pressing her lips to the roll of bill. "Old Suke's in luck. She's done a great deal. Toot! a great deal; but they let my baby starve; my little white baby."

CHAPTER XXIV.

JULIA'S absence gave rise to a great deal of gossip among the guests of Mrs. Singleton. All that was known definitely about it, was, that at an early hour in the morning, she had driven to the city in the carriage, and that it had returned without her. Mr. Westerly was in a fever of doubt and anxiety about her. He sent to Jack to learn if he knew anything of her whereabouts; and when an answer was returned, that he did not, went to the city himself, more than half believing that Miss Dempster had something to do with the mystery. But Miss Dempster was to all appearances as innocent as usual.

"Miss Julia is calling on some of her old friends," she said, sarcastically, when she was questioned about it. "She will not be absent long. It is the lady's way of doing things in a sly, secret way; probably she believed that there would be a great excitement caused by her absence."

This was said in the parlor, the second morning after Julia's disappearance. The few that heard it—Frank Jennings among the number—tittered and laughed in acknowledgment of Miss Dempster's sarcasm.

"Don't, Aunt Harriet!" said Lucia, in a low tone. "Mr. Westerly is coming."

Miss Dempster glanced up, to meet Mr.

Westerly's eyes fixed inquiringly upon her face.

"Do you know anything about Miss Julia's absence?" he asked, coming close up to her.

"How should I know anything about it?" she asked, quickly, almost forgetting herself.

"I cannot answer that," he said, his voice sinking lower, as he spoke. "I asked the question from my knowledge of the past," he added, significantly. "She was lost once, I believe, when she went to the city with you!"

He passed by her, as he said this, without looking into her face to see the effect that his words had produced. "That is not a tithe of what you will yet hear," he said, to himself, as he left her. "You deserve a thousand times more."

Discontented and troubled, he could not stay long in a place; and from the parlor he went to Mr. Singleton's room. He found that gentleman worried and fretted beyond expression, and looking pale and dispirited.

"You have heard nothing from Julia," Mr. Westerly said. "I know that, by the expression of your face."

"Nothing beyond a positive assertion from Elsa that she was in a good place and safe; but her lips trembled when she said it, and I more than half believed that she was assuming the assurance to relieve me."

"It is very strange," said Mr. Westerly.

"And stranger than all, that the last time that I looked upon her face, it was almost the exact counterpart of that!" he said, pointing to the portrait.

"And what do you think?" asked Mr. Westerly, quickly. "Do you suppose, for a moment, that?"

He did not finish the sentence. The sound of a light, familiar footstep upon the stairs silenced him. "That is Julia's step!" he exclaimed, springing up. He opened the door just in time to catch a glimpse of her face, as she entered her room.

"It is she!" he said half impatiently. "I believe I am as troubled as you are about it," he added, apologizing for his manner.

"I believe you are," Mr. Singleton replied, significantly.

Mr. Westerly reddened. "Ah, I never could keep any secrets from you," he said, frankly, extending his hand. "I used to try it when I was a boy."

"But, in the face of this secret, my dear James, let me beg you not to be rash. There is Miss Lucia, and the world would say"—

"To the deuce with Miss Lucia!" exclaimed Westerly. "I have no patience with her. I'd as soon take it into my head to marry Miss Dempster."

Mr. Singleton smiled. "I was merely putting the world's opinion before you, not my own," he said.

"World, or not, in my favor, it makes little difference with me. I am as independent of its opinions as I am of its favor. To be sure, for a few weeks past, I have been in the toils of the enemy, but, thank God! I am quite free, now. I can see my way clear, at last."

Just then, Julia entered the room, looking slightly pale, but very bright and happy.

"I know I have caused you a great deal of trouble," she said, "but I could not very well help it. I—I—was obliged to go."

Whether purposely or not could not be told, but she seated herself, at that moment, upon the sofa, directly beneath the portrait. She wore about her shoulders, as was her custom much of the time, a crimson mantle, which as she spoke she confined about her throat with her white hand. At that moment the likeness was complete between her and the pictured face of her mother.

"Do not move, Julia!" exclaimed Mr. Westerly, rising hastily. "Do not move; but look, now, Mr. Singleton!"

Mr. Singleton gave one glance into Julia's startled face, and dropped his head upon his hands. "O God!" he said, "if I could but know."

"And I know," said Julia, in a trembling voice, rising and going towards him. "I have carried this secret in my heart for many weary months, this secret of my birth. No, do not interrupt me, my—father—my blessed, kind father—let me tell you about it, and about the terrible torture it has been to me."

But he would not let her speak, then; what she had already said was enough food, at that moment, for his hungry heart. He took her in his arms as if she had been a little child, and covered her lips cheeks and eyes with kisses. His eyes rained tears upon her upturned face, and he murmured, again and again:—

"My child! My Florence! Thank God! thank God!"

"But *you* are not sure of this," she said; "if you would but hear me."

But he would not listen; and then, half laughing and half crying, she drew the embroidered waist from her pocket and held it before his eyes. "I went away to find that," she said. "It is like the one that the old nurse sent you. I wore it when—when I was stolen."

The excited man caught the treasure from her hands, and wept tears of joy upon it; and then, as though it were conscious, he pressed it passionately to his lips. Oh, it was such a happy, happy moment for him!

"You have known this for a long time?" he questioned. "And oh how blind, how very blind, I have been! There was something in my heart, all the time, but I could not understand what it was, my child!"

In the meantime, dimly comprehending the scene before him, Mr. Westerly sat without speaking, his eyes moist with tears.

"You are glad, I am sure," Julia said, going to him.

"Glad for you, oh, yes! a thousand times glad!" he answered, fervently, taking her hand. "But you were the same to me without a name, that you are with one," he added, in a low tone.

"From my heart I am sure of that," she replied; "I wish I could tell you how happy I am in knowing it."

"I don't know about this, James," spoke up Mr. Singleton, eyeing them askance. "I don't know about losing at once what I have just found."

"Why, father—no one is talking of"—
"Of what?" he interrupted, laughing.

She turned away from Mr. Westerly with a crimsoning face. "I did not mean," she began again.

"Do not try to explain yourself," Mr. Westerly said. "I will do this for you the first opportunity I have."

"But what if I should refuse to hear your explanations?" inquired Mr. Singleton.

"Ask Julia that question, if you please."

But Julia slipped from the room just then, without giving him a chance to question her.

CHAPTER XXV.

THAT night in Mr. Singleton's parlors there was a large gathering. Mr. Singleton, himself, said that it was in honor of Julia's return. At this Miss Dempster

sneered in a quiet, cutting way, and Mrs. Singleton gave her head a slight toss, while Miss Lucia, in close conversation with Frank Jennings, remarked that "papa Singleton was never weary of bringing his wonder into notice; it was a street song to-day; a street dance for to-morrow, and so on to the end of the chapter."

The company had been assembled some time before Julia made her appearance. Leaning upon Mr. Singleton's arm, she entered the room, and took a seat in the immediate vicinity of Miss Dempster and Lucia.

"Have you had a pleasant journey, and is Mr. Farley well?" inquired the latter.

"A pleasant journey, and Mr. Farley is well," Julia replied, smiling.

"And pray how nearly has he approached to the editorial chair, for I believe that is the prime object of his life?"

"You must ask that of my friend Elsa; I think she can inform you correctly," was the answer.

"Modesty," whispered Lucia, in Mr. Jennings' ear.

That worthy smiled. He felt bound to approve everything which Lucia said or did. And Lucia smiled, too, but it was for a different reason. She saw Mr. Westerly enter the room at that moment.

"Where is your cousin this evening?" she inquired.

"Walking with Mr. Farley, I believe; her tastes are somewhat peculiar."

"The result of peculiar associations. Were she a relative of mine, I should not rest as easily as you do."

"I presume not, but"—

He paused. Mr. Singleton had arisen and was again offering his arm to Julia. "Another street song," whispered Lucia.

"Or a dance," put in Miss Dempster, in a low voice. "I think, however, if there is anything in appearances, that one gentleman of our acquaintance will not again join that interesting spectacle. The young lady will be obliged to whirl alone, as they do in the streets."

"If I am the gentleman to whom you refer," came to Miss Dempster's startled ear, "I beg leave to inform you of your mistake. The young lady will not be obliged to *whirl* alone, as you very elegantly express it. I more than half believe that that destiny will fall to others to whom it will be more fitting."

"Eaves-dropping," laughed Miss Dempster, while her eyes flashed. "Where were you?"

"Within hearing distance," was the curt answer.

"And speaking distance, too," put in Lucia, angered by his scornful manner.

"You have every evidence of that," he replied, looking her straight in the face.

"Both conclusive and satisfactory," she said, curling her full red lip.

Mr. Westerly bowed. For her own sake he had a mind to caution her, but there were too many listeners about, and so he remained silent. Just then a movement of Mr. Singleton's which he very well understood, attracted his attention. With Julia upon his arm, he stood in the centre of the room glancing proudly about him.

"My friends," he began, and as he spoke, every murmur was hushed. "I have something very pleasant to tell you. It shall be done in a very few words. This is my own daughter, Miss Florence Singleton, and not Julia, as you have known her for the few past weeks. This fact has been proved beyond a doubt. Of this, I, myself, have been entirely ignorant until within a very brief period, but the truth is none the less welcome. The story is an old one, and doubtless familiar to nearly all of you. My little child—my Florence—disappeared mysteriously many years ago, and I gave her up as dead, but by some strange fate her life became connected with mine again. Without knowing that I was befriending my own child, I befriended her. God be praised for it. So, my friends, this is my Florence whom I present to you, to-night—my child!"

A silence of a moment ensued, then a quick murmur ran through the company, followed by a general time of congratulations. Whichever way Florence turned there was a hand extended to her. One lady had noticed that she resembled Mr. Singleton, another had marked the likeness existing between her and the portrait in the library, while still another had secretly prophesied, knowing all the circumstances perfectly, that some day Mr. Singleton would learn that it was his own flesh and blood that he was caring for.

But in the meanwhile, not a word from Miss Dempster's lips. "Won't you offer your congratulations with me, aunt?" asked Lucia. "This is very pleasant for us."

Miss Dempster flashed her wild eyes upon her without a word. "Oh, you prefer to remain silent, then! I shall be obliged to avail myself of Mr. Westerly's kindness," she continued, turning to him.

"With pleasure," he said, offering his arm.

"Have you tendered the lady your compliments?" she asked.

"Some time since; an hour after her return."

"Oh, indeed! then you helped plan this pleasant surprise for us. I, for one, am very grateful."

She spoke quietly and smoothly, but her heart was full of bitterness. "I am happy to congratulate you, Miss Singleton," she said, touching the tips of her fingers to Florence's hand. Then turning away, she went back to her aunt and whispered one single word in her ear; that word was "Lost." And the wily woman echoed it—"Lost!"

"Shall I accept Frank Jennings—he is rich and handsome—shall I?"

"Yes, yes! the sooner the better."

But where were Jack and Elsa in the meantime? Not in the garden, as Mr. Jennings had said; but very quietly seated side by side on the sofa, in the library.

"And so at last, I am to be an editor!" Jack said, drawing a long breath. "Do you remember what a penchant I used to have for getting up items, when my ambition was in its earliest infancy?"

"Yes," Elsa answered, laughing and blushing. "I remember one that you"——

She stopped short, her face resembling a pink arbutus blossom. Jack put the tips of his fingers under her chin, and said, trying to lift her drooping face, "Look up! was it an item scribbled on the old wooden table? and did it run along in this way?"——

"Don't, please, don't," she pleaded.

"Ah, but I want to know if you are thinking of the same that I am. Mine runs—no, don't attempt to silence me—'Married in Boston, by the Rt. Rev. Israel Potter, assisted by his worthy spouse, Jack Farley of the *Alley Gazette*, to Miss Elsa Weston, all of B——.' Was that the one?"

But Elsa of a sudden found herself without a memory. She couldn't tell, she was sure that she couldn't.

"Well, then," said Jack, "if your memory is so short, supposing that we have a real item in a real paper; 'let it be'——

The library door opened. "Ah, indeed!

this room seems to be very well occupied," exclaimed Mr. Westerly, laughing. "A moment since Julia and I decided in favor of 'Solitude's charms.'"

"Let us all enjoy it together, then," Jack answered, blushing like a school-girl.

"What a splendid color you have, Jack!" exclaimed Florence. "What is the matter?"

"I was just asking Elsa for an item," he answered trying to put a bold face upon the matter.

"And it is to be furnished—when?" queried Mr. Westerly.

"That is our secret," was the answer.

But we must drop the curtain upon the scene, contenting the reader with the assurance, that at the same time, the same week, there were two items, instead of one, furnished for Jack Farley's paper—James Westerly's marriage with Florence Singleton—Jack Farley's (or *John*, for that was the way it was written,) with Elsa Weston. A short time after, Lucia Dempster astonished the fashionable circle in which she moved by marrying Frank Jennings. And still later, Miss Harriet Dempster, for some reason that the world at large could not get at, went crazy and was carried to an insane asylum.

Old Israel Potter and wife disappeared very suddenly, after Julia's visit, and were never again seen in their old quarters. For many years, hopping Suke kept her room in the old alley. She at last gave it up at the earnest solicitation of Florence and Elsa, for one that was cleaner, and more wholesome. But she did not thrive well in her new habitation. She died in a few weeks after entering it, leaving her treasures to good Jackie, as she called him to the last.

And now, what more can I tell?—of the happiness that came so perfectly to those who had suffered long and bravely?—the full, rich life of Mr. Singleton, blessed by the love of Florence? And were Frank Jennings and Lucia happy? They were gay and fashionable. Further than that I cannot say.

Finally, and lastly, in the words of the preacher, I heard, not long since, that Mr. and Mrs. Westerly were blessed with a fine son, and that Mr. and Mrs. Farley were rejoicing in the possession of a young daughter. Here, then, reader, is a chance for another romance. I will make room for it by closing this.

[THE END.]

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

BY J. W.

WE had heard the night-birds calling in the thickets far away,
While the shades of eve were falling, while the twilight gathered gray,
And the scented gales of gloaming wafted secrets from the sea,
And the first pale star was gleaming in a golden mystery.

Then a holy calm enwrapt us, and a blissful silence fell;
Far away the doves were 'plaining, droned the beetle in the dell.
Ah! the words that are not uttered, like the songs that are not sung,
Are more musical in cadence than are known to mortal tongue.

Had we eaten of the lotus, or was this a land of spells?
This an isle of ancient fable where a great enchant-er dwells?
Naught is fair but that we dream of; and we dreamt a little while,
As the wanderer in the desert dreameth of the distant Nile.

All that bygone times we dreamt of, when the earth was fresh and young,
And great Pan beside the river piped the rustling reeds among.
There were naiads in the streamlets, there were dryads in the trees,
And the apples still hung golden in the fair Hesperides.

We are wiser; we have banished from their haunts the gods of old;
All that wondering faith has vanished with the out-lived Age of Gold;
Yet when moonlight winds are blowing, lovers' voices blending low,
Murmur still the same old story Paris whispered long ago.

Yonder moon is growing paler; soon within the reddening sky
Shall the star of morning vanish as the sun-god draweth nigh,
And the visions that are born in the sweet silence of the night,
Like mist armies on the hillsides, from his darts shall take their flight.

WALLOON TRADITIONS.

IN these days of enlightenment, when people are loth to believe anything that they cannot see with their own eyes or explain by their own reasoning, it seems almost incredible that there should be a race of Europeans living, as do the Walloons, on the confines of Belgium and France, whose peasants believe that good and bad spirits actually exist in their midst, and that success or failure is entirely due to the agency of mountain spirits, dwarfs and domestic goblins.

Some of the most popular of the Walloon superstitions relate to dwarfs. These are called *Halver-mannekens* (half-men) and *Kabouter-mannekens* (little fellows) by the Flemish, and are said to live in caves and subterranean places. Many tales are told of their skill and intelligence. The villagers of Hasselt, in Limburg, asserted that whenever war raged in the neighborhood, numbers of dwarfs would appear; that they lived in a large cave in the woods, only coming

into the village to obtain what they needed and leaving it as soon as they were satisfied, without harming anything. When the dwarf-wives became old, they allowed their husbands to shut them up underground, after providing them with a loaf of bread; and the most diligent search by the keenest eyes could not discover where the earth had been disturbed.

In another village is a hill called Kabouterberg, in which there are many caverns; these are supposed to be the dwelling-places of some dwarfs who were in the service of a local miller. Whenever his grindstone needed whetting, he had only to put overnight a slice of bread and butter and a glass of beer upon it, and in the morning his stone was ready for use. The same reward was sufficient to procure the washing of the family's clothes.

In a neighboring district another miller, being unable to finish his task of sifting flour, left its completion until the next day,

and on going away, accidentally dropped a piece of bread and butter. When he returned the next morning, he was amazed to find his work had been finished during the night, and the food had disappeared. Determined to prove that his sight and memory had not deceived him, he repeated the experiment, with a similar result. Being anxious to know who worked so well for such small pay, he hid on the third night behind some sacks, and about midnight saw a naked dwarf appear, who, after eating the food placed ready for him, set to work diligently. The miller pitied the little fellow, who labored away without any clothes to protect him from the cold, and on the following night placed a warm suit of garments with the bread, butter, and beer; after which the manikin never appeared without his clothes.

In the Pays Liegeois, legends relate that the household duties are performed by larger spirits, who answer to the German Kobold, the Scotch Brownie, and Milton's "Lubber Fiend." These are called Sotays, and are said to be more active, industrious, and disinterested than any of the goblin race. The Sotay mows the hay; reaps, thrashes, and winnows the corn; cleans the stables and horses—for which he has an especial liking—and at daybreak everything is finished without anyone knowing by whom or how it has been accomplished. The only recompense claimed is a bowl of milk—the "cream bowl duly set."

Tradition relates that the Sotays are adepts in the art of metallurgy; and the peasants of Dinant—the place so famed in bygone days for the manufacture of pots and kettles—constantly tested the practical knowledge of these amateur tinkers. When a pot or saucepan was cracked or broken, if it were placed on the doorstep and the door quickly closed, it would be found mended in two minutes.

To each of the countless ruins in the provinces of Namur and Liege, popular credulity assigns a class of evil spirits, called by the Walloons *gattes d'or* (golden goats), from the Walloon *gatt*, a goat. These gnomes are said to guard a treasure hidden far down in a precipice underneath the ruins; and the belief is that should any one be rash enough to try and unearth this treasure, the *gattes d'or* use a charm which allures the searcher towards them; and they then lead him on and on, till he loses him-

self in the bowels of the earth, when they disappear and leave him to perish. The peasants point out the crevices in the rock under the ruins as being the passages through which the gnomes pass to and from their dwelling-places.

The superstitions held by the Walloons are shared by all the Belgian peasantry, in common with other nations who claim a northern origin. They believe in all kinds of omens, of which the following are the most universal: To meet a priest when about to undertake anything unusual is considered a certain sign of failure, and the performer will invariably turn back, convinced that the day is lost. The hooting of owls, the howling of dogs, the crossing of forks, the spilling of salt, thirteen at table, are here, as elsewhere, taken for evil omens. Few will throw reeds in the fire, because they are of service to oxen; and an ox being present at our Saviour's birth, it ought, therefore, to be held as sacred. The bed of a dying person must be placed in such a position that the rafters cannot run in a contrary direction to it; for, unless they are parallel, the agonies of death would inevitably be protracted. When linen is washed the water is never said "to boil," but "to play;" otherwise the clothes would be destroyed. To catch a wren is to bring sorrow or death into the family of its captor. Precious stones are supposed to possess virtues more valuable than their intrinsic worth. The turquoise guards its wearer from falls and accidents. Diamonds, emeralds, and pearls were formerly used to detect infidelity. An ærolite is said to be unsurpassed as a means for discovering a thief. The metal must be ground to powder, then mixed with flour and made into bread, of which no genuine thief can swallow the smallest portion. On Easter Sunday it was the custom to breakfast off two eggs that had been laid on Good Friday, in order to render the eater proof against fever. To abstain from meat after Lent was a cure for the toothache. On Christmas Eve a piece of the burnt Yule log is preserved and put under the bed, to serve as a protection against lightning; and a willow branch that has been blest on Palm Sunday is kept in a sacred corner. Peasants mark their walls with a cross, as a preventive against fire. During the annual fair at Fosse, in Namur, the women come from all parts carrying osier wands, with which they touch the image of St. Bridget, and then

stroke their cattle with the same wands, either to cure their ailments or to protect them from disease.

Notwithstanding that the mountainous districts are in all countries the strongholds of superstition, the lowlands here are full of the same beliefs. A curious custom was observed at Willebroeck, Vive St. Bavon, and other villages near Courtrai. When anyone dies, the clergy of the parish meet to conduct the body to the churchyard; and if on their way they chance to come to four cross-roads, the bearers put down the coffin, and all kneel to repeat a short prayer. The idea is, that those who have left the world are sure to return to it; that, as there are four ways, the traveler might wander aimlessly about, not knowing in which direction his home lay; therefore, his friends pray for him at one of the roads, so that he may choose the right path and not be misled by evil spirits. But at Oostmalle, a still more extraordinary observance prevails; the wife accompanies the dead body of her husband to the grave, sitting up on his coffin. There seems to be no satisfactory reason for this custom.

One of the most singular custom was that called the Court du Coucou, which occurred annually at Polleur. This ancient village lies at the bottom of the valley between Verviers and Spa, near the famous castle of Franchimont. On the first Sunday after the 15th of August, the fête was celebrated amid an immense gathering of people. A mock-court of justice was formed, with a president, and all assembled at the inn nearest to the bridge which joined the village of Polleur to that of Sart. From the inn, the court adjourned to the bridge itself; and before its tribunal were summoned all the hen-pecked husbands and those who were possessed of any peculiarity. The proceedings began with the most ridiculous pleadings, and any stranger who happened to be present was constantly appealed to, and asked the most nonsensical questions. The accused, who were always found guilty, were condemned to pay a fine, which must be spent at the inn; and to give variety to the proceedings, the culprit was compelled to get into a cart, which was backed from the bridge till it reached a heap of mud or something similar, when it was tilted up, and the unhappy one was shot out. The trials by court concluded in the arraignment of the last married man in the village; and the fact

being proved against him, he was at once thrown over the bridge into the river, which insured a good ducking. The rest of the day was spent at the inn.

Another feature of these ceremonies was the display of a banner on which was painted a nondescript monster called "*La Bête de Staneux*." It represented a kind of centaur, half horse half woman, with a lion's tail. Long hair floated down its back, and it held a bow in the left hand, and an arrow in the right. This picture was exhibited at the different inns till 1789, when the fête was suppressed. From time immemorial, the banner had been carefully preserved within the wall of the parish church; and it was only after the year 1786, that the priests allowed it to be seen beyond them. During the same time, a figure rudely carved in wood, which usually stood in the church porch, was also exhibited, and burnt when the fête was abolished.

According to the best authorities, this *Bête de Staneux* was said to be a representation of the ancient goddess of the Ardennes, where Diana was worshiped under different names. The people of Polleur had a tradition that the picture was displayed in order to commemorate a victory gained over a monster who infested the neighboring forest of Staneux.

The custom of celebrating the opening of the month of May was held everywhere in the vicinity of the Meuse; and some fifty years ago Maypoles were placed before roadside chapels, and images of the Virgin and other saints, and in front of the cures' houses. At Aerschot, and many other places in the Campine, a Maypole was set up before the doors of unmarried women. The young and pretty had one decked with buds and flowers, while the older women had nothing but a stick covered with withered leaves.

The last observance worthy of notice is one that was retained in the church of Nivelles, where there was a crypt. Between the wall and a pillar close by was a hole, through which, the people believed, no one in a state of mortal sin could pass.

The well-known story of the "*white lady*" belongs to these parts, and her traditions are preserved by the families of Angewieiller, Croy, Bassompierre, and Salm, all of whom it severally effects. This fairy gave as a love-token, to one of the Counts of Angewieiller, a goblet, a ring and a spoon, which

were to be kept as heirlooms, and given to his three daughters on their marriage days, to insure them happiness and prosperity.

The goblet passed into the possession of the house of Croy; and one day, as a marquise, who was a descendant of this family, was showing it to some of her friends, it slipped from her hands, and was broken in-

to hundreds of pieces. Picking up every bit, she locked them carefully away in a cabinet, saying: "If I cannot have it whole again, I will at least preserve every fragment." The next day when she went to the cabinet to look at the pieces, she found the goblet as perfect as it had been before the accident. So goes the story.

A PINE-TREE SHILLING.

BY ELIZABETH BIGELOW.

THE very first breeze that had been abroad in Plumfield that day stole in at the open church window, ruffled the gray hair over the heated brow of good Parson Langley, who had just finished a long missionary sermon, and wandered down the broad aisle, wafting scents from the pink posies which all the girls brought to church, mingled with the Sunday savor of bear's oil and cologne, and the more secular odor of distant hay-fields.

Every one brightened up. It was very warm, and Parson Langley seemed sometimes to have "forgotten his amen." Old Deacon Saunders just then started down the aisle with the long-handled contribution-box, which had not gone out of fashion in primitive Plumfield, and there began a great searching of pockets, untying of knots in handkerchief corners, and opening of tightly-clenched small fists, revealing hoarded pieces of silver of all denominations. An Armenian had been preaching and lecturing in Plumfield, dressed in the costume of his country, and the result was an unusual interest in foreign missions. Every boy and girl gave something, from Sol Price, who never bought a rubber ball without calculating how much interest on the money he could have got in twenty years, down to Tootsey Pringle, who was so greedy that she spent her Sunday-school penny every week for a molasses corn-ball.

Minty Bligh sat alone in a pew about midway of the broad aisle, for her Aunt Cordelia had, for a great wonder, stayed at home from church, and Jack wished to sit in the enlivening society of some other boys in the last pew, beside the open door; and, to his great surprise, Minty made no objec-

tion, not even suggesting, as usual, that it might be her painful duty to tell Aunt Cordelia; and Minty knew very well that the charms of that seat consisted in the facility with which Liffy Joyce, who blew the organ, could drop gum-drops down from the gallery into the boys' mouths during the long prayer, and the fact that the church door opened directly upon the grass plot, without the intervention of a porch, and a fellow could be buoyed up by the hope of luring in a stray dog or sheep, or catching a grasshopper in his hat.

Something must be the matter with Minty when she abandoned him to such temptations as these, thought Jack; for Minty was almost fourteen, and propriety was getting to be her strong point.

Dr. Brodish and Rid Jellison, who happened to sit behind Minty that day, thought, also, that something was the matter with her. She looked about her furtively, and her face flushed and paled as Deacon Saunders came down the aisle; and when he stopped at her pew her arm shook as she extended it towards the box. She seemed to be fumbling in the box, and Rid Jellison wondered if she were going to make change there like old Cleur, the blacksmith, who always made the deacons await his convenience. Minty was not as slow as old Cleur, but when Deacon Saunders reached Rid Jellison he found him sitting bolt upright with astonishment, with his lips pursed up as if to whistle, and quite forgetting the two-penny piece which he had meant to put into the box with such an air that every one should think it a quarter. And Dr. Brodish was gazing spellbound at Minty, and rubbing his glasses as if he

thought they had been playing him tricks.

Old Deacon Saunders, who was slow of sight and wits, had observed nothing except that people were tiresomely slow. When he had at length secured the contributions of the two persons whose attention seemed to be wandering so decidedly, and had passed tranquilly along, Rid Jellison saw Phosy True, Minty's cousin and particular friend, turn around from the very front pew and look inquiringly at Minty. And he saw Minty give a little nod, at which Phosy's face brightened, although she turned again and looked anxiously at Minty, who was as white now as if she were just going to faint.

"Well, if I ever did!" said Rid Jellison to himself. "A minister's daughter and a deacon's granddaughter! It's just what I always thought of such people; but who would believe it!"

When the service was over, Minty waited just outside the church door for Phosy True. Rid Jellison stood very near them when they met, with his back turned in apparent indifference, but with his ears alert. They whispered, however, and he could only hear now and then a word, until Minty said, with deep feeling, "O Phosy, I do feel awfully wicked!"

"Well, it's no wonder she does!" said Master Rid Jellison to himself, as he took his way homeward. "Stealing out of the contribution box! That beats *me*! She's a pretty one to call *me* names! I always meant to pay her up, but I never expected to have such a chance as this."

Before Rid's mental vision there arose, vividly, a scene in which he, caught by Minty in Miss Cordelia Bligh's garden, with his pockets and his hat full of plums—the precious greengages which Miss Cordelia sacredly reserved for her invalid poor people—had listened to Minty's opinion of him, delivered with great vigor and unreserve.

"She called me a thief,"—Rid's face grew dark with wrath at the recollection—"but I never stole out of a contribution box!"

And that other occasion he recalled, when he had painted Minty's pet Guinea pig pumpkin yellow, with a pot of paint stolen from the men who were painting Deacon Saunders' house. The pig was greatly beautified, and of course it was some ordinary pig ailment or delicacy of constitution that caused his decease a day or two after;

but Miss Cordelia, set on by Minty, tried to have him arrested. It was ridiculous to talk of having a person arrested for painting a pig, but robbing the contribution box was a different matter!

But there was an embarrassing obstacle in the way of Rid's revenge. His reputation for veracity was so very poor that no one would believe him if he should tell what he had seen. He put the matter to himself in a little different light.

"People think so much of that stuck-up little spitfire that they won't believe such a thing of her. But I'll find some way to make them!"

Rid was a city boy who had been sent to live with Deacon Saunders to keep him out of mischief. It was the general opinion in Plumfield that the object had not been attained.

When Minty reached home her aunt was distressed at her white face, and when she admitted that her head ached so that she could not eat any luncheon, Miss Cordelia insisted upon accompanying her up-stairs to her room and helping her to lie down. It was very trying for Minty, who had a silver-piece tightly clenched in her hand which she could find no opportunity to hide away unseen. She expected every moment that her aunt would discover it, as she helped her to change her dress for a loose dressing-gown, untied her hair-ribbons and loosened her braids, and bathed her head with eau-de-cologne. As soon as she had tip-toed out of the room, after making Minty lie down, with a napkin wrung out in ice-water upon her head, and all the windows darkened, Minty sprang up again. Her head was really aching; but that pain was nothing compared to the burning of that silver-piece in her palm. She must hide it at once, but no place that she could think of seemed safe. She put it between the mattresses of her bed at first, but she remembered that Philomela, Aunt Cordelia's maid-of-all-work, would find it when she made the bed. After all, it would be safe enough in her own drawer in the little cabinet with a key, which Phosy and Will had given her on her last birthday. But when she had locked it securely into the cabinet and put the key under her pillow, she could not sleep.

"Phosy was so happy! And I would do it again for poor Will! And it seemed so fortunate that Aunt Cordelia stayed at home. If only I had not been so nervous

and blundering! I ought to have given it to Deacon Saunders as I came out of church; but he is so deaf, and I couldn't think of anything to say about it that would be true. I will go to his house to-morrow and give it to him. Perhaps if I wrap it in a piece of paper and write on it that it belongs to the mission collection, I can leave it somewhere without saying anything."

Minty was somewhat consoled by this idea, but she could not go to sleep; and in the dim light the figures of the delightful Mother Goose paper with which Aunt Cordelia had had her walls covered took on queer resemblances. The king in his parlor, counting out his money, was Deacon Saunders; there was his very nose, and the wren on his forehead that grew red when he was angry; he looked angry, now, as if he had discovered that some money was missing. Tom, the Piper's Son, surrounded and pursued by the jeering crowd on account of his theft—had he always had a long, light braid, and a hat with a blue feather? Bluebeard was Rid Jellison; there was no doubt about that; and he was looking at her just as he had looked at her coming out of church, and his big key had shrunk into the little key of her cabinet. But Jack the Giant Killer was Will, her cousin Will; not lame as he had always been, but straight and strong; and the giant's head which he had cut off was Rid Jellison's! There was some comfort in that. Then the Three Wise Men of Gotham were inviting her to go to sea with them, and she was tempted to go until she saw that the initials "J. Q. C., Jr." were stamped upon the bowl, and the sail they were spreading was Deacon Saunders' bandanna handkerchief, and the middle wise man was Mr. Bogigian, the Armenian missionary! Then he was suddenly transformed into the crooked man who found a crooked sixpence; and just as his crooked cat was turning into Rid Jellison, everything faded away, and Aunt Cordelia, softly opening the door, said to herself, "How soundly she is sleeping!"

It rained the next day, a steady, hopeless rain, and Aunt Cordelia would not hear of Minty's going up to Deacon Saunders'. It seemed very cruel, but of course she could not know how important Minty's errand was; she thought it very strange that Minty should have so strong a desire to see Rilla Saunders, who was not an intimate friend.

Several things happened that day in

Plumfield, although it was rainy. For one, Dr. Brodish made a professional call on Grandma True, who had been bed-ridden for a long time, and had partially lost her memory and her wits, and—poor old lady!—from being very gentle and amiable, had grown so cross-grained in temper that it was very difficult to get along with her, especially as the doctor said that it would endanger her life to oppose her in anything. And Phosy's mother was dead, and although there was a housekeeper and a nurse, the responsibility of keeping Grandma comfortable in mind came upon Phosy.

Grandma True had always been much interested in foreign missions.

"I couldn't go to hear the Armenian, but I gave my pine-tree shilling to the cause," she said to Dr. Brodish. "I couldn't afford to give five dollars as I wanted to, but I thought my pine-tree shilling might be worth as much as that. There wasn't another in this county, and I don't know as there was in the whole state of Maine. And Phosy there—some people think she's a good girl, but I know what I have to bear!—she tried to make me believe that it wasn't mine; that I'd given it to Will when he was a little mite of a boy, and he thought so much of it I mustn't give it away. As if I couldn't do what I pleased with my own! They'd get everything I had if they could, but I make them mind me. You put that shilling into the contribution box, didn't you, Phosy?"

"Yes'm," said Phosy, but she flushed scarlet under Dr. Brodish's keen eyes.

When Dr. Brodish came driving back through the main street of Plumfield, in all the rain he stopped to deliver a letter which Phosy had sent to Minty. He was very kind to the boys and girls; there was scarcely a child in Plumfield who had not at some time been profoundly convinced that Dr. Brodish was Santa Claus.

The letter was from Will, who had been sent to Boston to be treated by a famous doctor for hip disease, from which he had suffered all his life. After explaining that what he had to go through with was not so bad that they need to worry—which was just like dear, unselfish old Will, Minty thought, with tears in her eyes—he went on to say that the doctor was "awfully kind to a fellow," and was a collector, like himself.

"He has an especially fine collection of coins," he wrote, "but he hasn't a pine-

tree shilling! He says they are very rare and valuable, and he wants to see mine. I've been tempted to have you send it by mail, but don't dare to risk it. I don't know how I should bear it if that should get lost. But when father comes to bring me home I wish you would send it by him in a sealed box, and please ask him to be very careful."

On the margin of the sheet Phosy had written, "O Minty! what should we do if you hadn't saved it?"

Minty almost forgot that she had any trouble. But it happened that just at that moment Johnny Crocker, a small boy with a large watch-chain and a great deal of manner, was lifting the brass knocker on Deacon Saunders' front door. He asked to see Deacon Saunders, but he confided his errand to Rilla, the Deacon's thirteen-year-old daughter, who came to the door.

"I put a half-dollar marked with my initials—J. Q. C., Jr., for John Quincy Crocker, Junior, you know—into the contribution box yesterday; and I have been thinking that, as the heathen don't know me, they might not think any more of it than of any other; and I have had it a good while, so I should like to change it for a plain one. As your father is the treasurer, I suppose he has the money."

Rilla went and told her father, and she said, too, that it was just like Johnny Crocker, and she believed he only wanted people to know that he had put a half-dollar into the box, which was, perhaps, uncharitable; but none of the Plumfield boys and girls liked Johnny Crocker, because he was, as they said, "a brag."

Deacon Saunders went into the room which was always called the study, because it had been used as such when the house was the parsonage, and opened a secret drawer in the queer, old, claw-footed secretary, and took out an old, hairy, moth-eaten wallet, with a piece of rope tied around it in lieu of a strap. It was the wallet in which he had kept his first savings, and the Deacon felt that the church's money was safer there than anywhere else. He looked the money all over, and then wiped his spectacles and looked it all over again, and then he poured it into a box and carried it out into the sitting-room where Johnny Crocker was waiting.

"Young eyes are better than old ones. I can't find a marked half-dollar there, but perhaps you can," he said.

Rilla came in and assisted in the search; there were old and battered silver-pieces, and new and shining ones; there were a few bank bills, and a five-dollar gold-piece; and there were, alas! two or three buttons, a bad cent, and a peppermint drop, collected, undoubtedly, from the back seat beside the door; but there was no half-dollar with "J. Q. C., Jr." upon it.

"I know I put it into the box," said Johnny, whose face had grown scarlet with excitement; "and my brother Frank and Dan Averill, who sat beside me, know it, too. Some thief must have taken it out!"

"And I know who the thief was!" said Rid Jellison, in the doorway. "You'd better b'lieve you'd be surprised if I should tell you!"

"Ridley, be careful," said Deacon Saunders, looking severely at him over his glasses. "Of course, if you really know who the thief is you are right to tell; but you are apt to be hasty, and it would be a serious matter for you to accuse anyone wrongfully."

"I ain't going to tell, anyway!" said Rid, turning angrily upon his heel. What was the use? They would no more believe it of Minty Bligh than of the minister! He must find some way to bring her out and prove it, before he said anything. Perhaps, after all, it would be better to hold his knowledge over her as a threat; he might get all the greengages this year in that way, and perhaps one of Miss Cordelia's young peacocks.

Johnny Crocker pumped him, privately, in vain. But before night it was known all over Plumfield that some one had stolen a half-dollar, marked with Johnny Crocker's initials, from the contribution box.

Early the next forenoon, as early as she could give Aunt Cordelia any reasonable excuse for going, Minty went over to Deacon Saunders'. As she went in at the garden gate her head was in a whirl, and her heart was beating in her ears so that it drowned even the birds' singing. She had not decided what to do or say, only that she must restore the half-dollar, and must still keep the secret of the pine-tree shilling; for Grandma True had a great many callers, who brought her all the news, and if any one knew about it she would soon know.

It was a very warm morning, and the hall door stood wide open, and, after the neighborly fashion of Plumfield, Minty

walked in. She was going into the sitting-room, when she saw that the study door was open, and moved by a sudden impulse, she went there instead. The room was empty; and there in the secret drawer of the old secretary, which Minty knew well—for her father had been the minister, and the old parsonage with its belongings, just as they were now, had been her home until within a year or two—in that secret drawer Deacon Saunders kept the church money. She knew it, because when she was once helping Rilla with a school exercise, on the secretary, she had told her so.

Minty looked about her and listened. No one was within sight or hearing. The window beside the secretary was wide open, and Rid Jellison's photographic apparatus stood outside on the grass. Almost the only unobjectionable amusement in which Rid indulged was the taking of photographs. Lately, to the great relief of the family, because it diverted his mind from evil ways, he had become very much interested in instantaneous photography. He had taken the purple rooster in the midst of his liveliest crowing—it really seemed as if he had taken his crow—and Billy Waite in the act of turning a somersault was expected soon to be a success. But now Rid's camera was forsaken. It seemed like one of the happenings which Aunt Cordelia called "providential," that there should be no one about.

Minty's finger touched the spring and the drawer flew open. She took out the old wallet. The rope was wound around and around it, and tied in a very hard knot, and Minty's hands trembled. But it was open at last, and the half-dollar with "J. Q. C., Jr." marked on it was slipped in. With her heart growing light, Minty retied the rope, and returned the wallet to the secret drawer. No sound had disturbed her, and the house still seemed deserted. The dining-room and kitchen were in the ell, a long way off; probably every one who was in the house was there. Tramps were unknown in Plumfield, and in the warm days all doors were left open.

Minty went out as she had come in, seeing no one, and danced for joy half the way home; now Deacon Saunders would think he had overlooked it before, and everything would be well.

But Minty was reckoning without her enemy, Rid Jellison. He was dancing for joy, too, just then, around his camera, and

declaring to himself, exultingly, that he had got her just like life, with the old pocket-book in her hand! It promised to be the best proof he had ever taken, and he would finish up a dozen photographs and stick them up in conspicuous places in the town!

"It was smart of me to hide behind that lilac bush when she came into the room," he said to himself. "And after the first time she didn't look out. I made the cloth cover my legs so that she couldn't have seen anything if she had. And the light was just right; if I had tried a dozen times I couldn't have done better! I rather guess they will b'lieve me now! The sun don't tell lies, anyhow!"

He was too impatient to wait; he finished a photograph, as he could, that very afternoon; when it was done he was uncertain what to do with it to make the very most of his revenge, but decided that it would be very satisfactory to carry it directly to Deacon Saunders. The Deacon was disposed to deal severely with evil doers. When he *knew* that Minty Bligh had tampered with the missionary collection he would not let her off easily.

Rid found the Deacon out by the barn, superintending the bringing in of the last load of hay. He looked at the photograph in great perplexity; his slow wits did not seem to absorb its meaning until Rid had explained it very fully. And then he seemed to think the sun had conspired with Rid to bear false witness. It was only when Rid went back to the contribution box, and what he had seen on Sunday, that the Deacon began to look both grave and startled.

"I'm going down along to prayer-meeting after supper, and I'll stop at Miss Bligh's," he said, putting the photograph into his pocket.

This was not exactly what Rid wished; he was anxious to take the photograph to the village himself and exhibit it in places where it would create the greatest sensation; it would take some time to finish another proof, and he could not well do it by lamplight.

"And if he goes right straight to her she'll manage to tell some story that will make it seem all right. I don't see what she did put the money back for." (This was a point which Rid had omitted in his explanation to Deacon Saunders.) "Scared, I s'pose. What a lot of money there must have been in that old wallet!"

Rid made a rough calculation, and decided that there was enough to buy a traveling photograph saloon in which one might go out to the Western plains and photograph Indians and cow-boys.

"And I believe I could find that spring now. What a fool I have been!" he exclaimed.

To be revenged on Minty Bligh seemed a very trifling satisfaction compared with the possibility that had flashed across his mind.

Deacon Saunders sat, embarrassed and unhappy, in Miss Cordelia Bligh's parlor, showing her the photograph and telling her all that Rid had told him.

"She put the half-dollar back—I found it there; and I've no doubt she took it by accident, somehow; but I thought you ought to know," said the Deacon.

And Miss Cordelia, much perplexed and distressed, sent for Minty. It seemed incredible that she should have anything to do with the pilfering from the contribution box of which everyone was talking.

Minty was white and red by turns, and looked altogether very guilty when she saw Deacon Saunders. And she cried out with amazement when she saw the photograph.

"I saw the camera, but it couldn't have taken me *by itself*! Oh, I know; it was Rid Jellison!" she said.

"Minty, what does it mean?" said Miss Cordelia, as severely as she could speak.

"I took the half-dollar out of the box, and I put it back again," said Minty. "It was a mistake, but—I meant to take something—and I can't tell anything about it! I've promised, and I couldn't tell anyway!"

Aunt Cordelia looked very stern, and Minty was bravely swallowing tears, when, "I can tell all about it," cried a cheerful voice.

The portiere swung aside, and Dr. Brodish, Dr. Santa Claus Brodish, who had seen Deacon Saunders go into the house, and suspected what was the matter, walked in.

"I don't consider myself bound to keep a secret that I discovered for myself, provided it is agreed that it shall go no farther. It was her Cousin Will's pine-tree shilling that Minty meant to take out of the contribution box. Grandma True had taken a fancy that it was hers, and she must give it; and Phosy humors all her fancies by my orders. Minty put her five-dollar gold-piece, that she had cherished a long time, (five dollars being

what the old lady thought the shilling was worth), into the box. They had the notion that many grown people have, that if they were true to the letter—if Phosy could tell her grandmother she had put the shilling into the box—there would be no lying. But when she tried to get the shilling out, being a little nervous, she took a half-dollar, too."

"I got the half-dollar first," said Minty, almost laughing now, it was so good to have a defender who knew all about it, "and I hadn't presence of mind to put it back; but I was determined to have the shilling, and, oh, dear! when I got them both I didn't know what to do."

Miss Cordelia was inclined to shake her head over the deceit, but Dr. Brodish declared that it was perfectly justifiable to deceive Grandma True, who, in her right mind, would be the last to rob Will of his precious pine-tree shilling; he thought they had done more than was necessary in giving the five dollars instead. And Deacon Saunders, who was thought to be grim and severe, settled the matter by "hemming" and "hawing," just as he did before he said "let us pray" in meeting, and then kissing Minty squarely on the forehead.

In the darkness and stillness of night Rid stole softly down to the study and fumbled about the old secretary until he found the spring. A moment more and the wallet was in his possession; and long before daylight he had shaken the dust of Plumfield off his feet.

There was consternation in the Deacon's household the next morning when it was discovered that Rid was missing. The Deacon went straight to the secretary and opened the secret drawer.

"O Father, he has stolen all the money!" cried Rilla.

The Deacon smiled grimly.

"He has stolen the wallet. I found a safer place for the money."

In a reform school, not far from Boston, there is a boy, known as Jones No. 2 (because they are all known as Jones whose names cannot be discovered), who boasts that he detected a girl who was stealing all the funds of a church, and exposed her by taking her photograph in the very act. But he left the proofs behind him (Deacon Saunders found and burned them), and the boys do not believe him. And Jones No. 2 reflects bitterly upon the injustice of the world.

It was never generally known how Johnny Crocker's half-dollar was lost and found, but people surmised that Rid Jellison had something to do with it.

When Will came home from Boston, with a prospect of being cured, but with many weary months of lying upon a sofa still before him, almost the first thing that poor

Grandma True said to him was: "Take care of your pine-tree shilling, Will. Phosy has a notion that it is hers, and would have put it in the contribution box, if I hadn't stopped her. I don't know what your grandfather would have said; there was nothing he prized much more than that pine-tree shilling."

ITALIAN LOVE SONG.

BY GEORGE EDWARD MAVIS.

O LOVE, to me in haste
Fly—for we soon must part;
Let thy slow step keep pace
With my wild heart.

O'er the blue, dark'ning hills
Faithful the fair star fades,—
Flickers, and dying, chills,—
Doubts are but shades.

BRADFORD, MASS., 1888.

O love! O mine—my own!
Sadly I seem to see
Roses, in tears, half blown,
Weeping for thee.

Night seasons come and go,
Ever the same song sing;
Breezes play light, winds blow,
Love is still king.

IN A MAD MOMENT.

BY L. B.

GEORGE COOK is my name to-day; but to-morrow, should any one call upon that name, I shall not answer to it. Before the sun is high in the heavens, I shall have paid the extreme penalty of the law, and expiated my sins with my life. "To be hanged by the neck until you be dead; and may God have mercy on your soul!" these were the solemn words which the judge addressed to me when the verdict of "Guilty" was given.

Mine was not much of a trial, because I had given myself up, and made my confession before the magistrate; and where the prisoner will persistently, and in spite of all advice to the contrary, plead guilty, and do all in his power to assist in bringing forward witnesses against himself, his counsel cannot make much of a case for the defence. The gentleman who defended me urged that I was of unsound mind, either at the time of committing the murder or when making the confession—it did not seem to matter much to him which; but there was nothing to support the theory, and the defence was set aside.

When the jury returned into court, no one was surprised at the verdict—"Guilty, but recommended to mercy on account of being self-accused."

I stood there almost breathless until the old judge spoke the words that condemned me to death, and then I heaved a deep sigh of relief. What good would my confession have done me, if after all, they had condemned me to penal servitude for life?

My counsel, in speaking to me after the trial, remarked:—

"You are the most unlucky man I ever knew, George Cook. Any other judge would have let you off with twenty years, or 'life' at most—but not old Willis. What does he care for a recommendation to mercy? He never takes the least notice of it. 'Guilty'—that's quite enough for him. He has never been known to let a man off easy when it has been in his power to hang him. He has hanged more men in his day than any other judge on the Bench. He goes by the nickname of 'the hanging judge.' However, we shall appeal, and endeavor to get the sentence commuted."

I assured him, with many thanks, that I was perfectly satisfied with the sentence, and hoped he would take no steps towards having it altered.

At last he went away quite irritated with me. Of course he had been much annoyed at the way in which the case for the defence had broken down, his eloquence having failed to carry conviction to the minds of the jurymen. I was nothing to him, alive or dead; but my crime was everything. He was a young man, and to have pulled me through alive would have been a feather in his cap. He would never have thought for one moment of the hopeless, crushing, maddening years of degradation and remorse to which his eloquence would have consigned me. I was a "case"—nothing more.

I am going to spend the few hours of life that remain to me in writing down briefly my own short history, and explaining how it is that I am here to-day with the brand of Cain upon me.

I am a murderer; but when I add that in my palmiest days I was only an acrobat, there are many who will not care to know more, but will lay down my confession with disgust. There are others who will recognize a fellow-creature and a part of our common humanity even in the person of an acrobat.

It is not necessarily a bad life for an active young fellow with a taste that way, in spite of all that is written and said against it. Of course it has its drawbacks, like every other calling; but I have seen instances of warmth of heart, disinterested generosity, and self-abnegation among poor acrobats which might put to shame many who ride in gilded coaches and whose names head subscription-lists for charities. I never saw one of those brutal ruffians who are supposed by an ignorant public to be fair samples of athletic trainers; and I ought to know something about the subject, seeing that I cannot recollect the time when I was not a member of Dash's company. Having been deprived of my parents, by death or desertion, at a very early age, I had no friends in the world save those I made among the members of Dash's troupe.

There were often men and women, specialists, who took short engagements with us; and these would sometimes entertain us with tales of horror and of cruelty to which we were strangers. So, perhaps, after all, I was unusually fortunate in meeting with

Mr. Dash, instead of some of the inhuman monsters whom these more experienced professionals were never weary of talking about.

Without being accused of vanity, I think I may say that Frank Foster and I were the shining lights of the company. I was only of average height, but my activity and strength astonished even old professionals; and, as to courage, I simply did not know what fear was.

I was not handsome; my face, plain at best, was disfigured by sundry scars and seams which bore testimony to the several accidents that had befallen me in my youth. One of these scars extended from ear to mouth; and my companions assured me that it turned livid when I was put out of temper, so they playfully termed it "Cook's weather-glass." My shoulders were broad and powerful; my muscles stood out like knotted cords.

I was an important personage in the programme; I do not know what they would have done without me. All the heavy parts fell to my lot—anything requiring brute force. I was the foundation on which a perfect pyramid of boys was built up—two or three, more or less, made little difference to me—and in my own line as an acrobat there was nothing I would not do or dare. In matters of horsemanship, however, Frank Foster was far before me. My bright, bonnie boy Frank—how proud I was of him, and how I loved him!

It was when I was a boy of fifteen, and we had been making a prolonged stay in the town of Archester that I first saw Frank, then a merry little child only eight years old. Our tent, our horses, and the procession we occasionally sent round the town appeared to possess for him even a stronger attraction than for most children. Hour after hour and day after day would he loiter about in the hope of seeing something; and an eager enthusiasm would light up his face even at the sight of the horses being led out to drink.

One day I discovered him standing upon his head and turning somersaults in a way that showed he had been practising the art. I was much amused with the little chap, so I entered into conversation with him, and soon learned the admiration in which he held our profession.

"Oh, what wouldn't I give to ride one of those beautiful horses!" he cried.

I never for a moment regarded him as a possible recruit for our company, seeing by his dress that he was the child of well-to-do people. I showed him all our horses and ponies, and the pair of performing poodles; sometimes I admitted him during practising hours, and, to his intense delight, let him ride round the arena on one of our quiet old horses. He came almost daily, and then suddenly his visits ceased, and I quite missed the little fellow and his merry prattle.

When some few weeks passed, and still he did not put in an appearance, I grew quite uneasy, fearing that the child might be ill; so I decided to go to the street where he lived, in the hope that I might hear something of him. Finally I determined to enter the shop kept by his mother, and ask after him.

I felt very shy as a ladylike woman rose and asked me how she could serve me.

When I had bashfully explained my mission her manner became decidedly austere, as she said:—

“Then you are one of the young men from the circus? Frank is quite well, thank you; but you will not see him there any more. We have forbidden him to go; the child had gone quite crazy about some one he calls ‘George Cook,’ whom he says he wants to grow up like. Indeed, we don’t thank them for encouraging him, as you must see we have quite other views for our son, and mean to put him to some respectable business.”

I hastened to explain that I was George Cook, and that I had no motive beyond a wish to please the child. Before I could conclude my explanation, I was interrupted by a cry of joy, as the little lad rushed out from a back room, and, throwing his arms about me, told me how glad he was to see me again.

As his mother gently disengaged him and I withdrew, I saw tears in his blue eyes—tears shed for love of me.

It must have been about four weeks after this incident that I was sent for to speak to the master in his room; and, on entering, I found him talking to no other than Mrs. Foster, with her little son by her side. She seemed terribly changed since that day I had seen her in the shop; she was sobbing violently, and looked pale and ill and poverty-stricken, while I noticed that both she and Frank were dressed in shabby mourning clothes.

Her story, briefly told, was this. Her husband had been taken suddenly ill, and had died two days afterwards; he had been reckless and extravagant, and his affairs were so involved, and so many unexpected difficulties had come upon her that she had been obliged to sell the shop and the whole of the furniture of their house; and if she succeeded in paying their debts, it would leave her without a penny in the world. Some kind friends were endeavoring to get her eldest child admitted into a charitable institution; but then there were five younger than Frank for her to support; and, as the boy had such a strong inclination that way, and she could no longer hope to put him to any respectable trade, she had come to beg Mr. Dash to let him join his troupe. The master had sent for me to ask if the child was a promising subject, as he was told I had seen something of him.

I declared that I thought the boy would pay for his training; and the bargain was struck and a new member enlisted. As Mrs. Foster was going, she turned to me with eyes full of motherly anxiety, and said:—

“You have been kind to him, and he loves you. Will you promise to befriend my poor fatherless boy in the future?”

I was deeply moved, and laying one hand in hers and one on the curly head of the lad, I answered:—

“You may trust me. I promise I will be a father to him.

So the boy came to be looked upon as belonging to me, and was often spoken of as “Cook’s boy;” while I was not a little proud of being called “Father George.”

I had led such a careless and independent life that it was new and delicious to me to feel that I had won the affection of Frank’s boyish heart—it touched some soft corner of my own; it was delightful to me to feel that he appealed to me, obeyed me, and looked up to me as if I had really been elder brother or father to him.

We were always together. I sought no other companion, and soon loved him as I had never before loved human being. He had an unusually good time of it, for none of the men or lads dared to bully my boy; they knew too well that if they did they would have to settle the matter with “Father George;” and, with my ever-increasing strength, I was an ugly customer to meet when my temper was roused. And yet I

did not bring him up to be a coward; I always left him to "fight it out" for himself if his opponent was about his own size and age.

His quickness and courage in the ring charmed me, and he did credit to the training which he received, and which I endeavored to make as easy to him as possible.

In a very short time he was advertised to make his first appearance as "The Wonderful Juvenile Equestrian, Little Frank." I can remember now how my heart swelled with pride as I stood in the centre of the ring, whip in hand, and watched my bonny Frank ride in from the entrance on his tiny bare-backed pony, his face flushed with excitement, and his neat little limbs shown off to perfection in the well-fitting, flesh-colored tights. The graceful air with which he kissed his finger-tips to the audience, in acknowledgment of the deafening applause with which he was greeted, and the quick, loving glance he cast upon me before commencing his clever performance, are both fresh in my memory.

The prison clock is relentlessly telling off the hours, and I seem no nearer the conclusion of the task I have set myself. If I would finish, I must hurry over the next few years with but a few words. Frank and I grew dearer and dearer to each other. When he was about twelve years old, I saved his life at some risk to my own. Frank could not swim, and one day, while bathing, he got into a current beyond his depth. He clung to life, and valued it as all happy, healthy-minded young people should; his gratitude was excessive, and he was always insisting that no sacrifice would be too great for him to make for me, since he owed his very life to me. If anything had been needed to seal the bond that held our hearts together, that event would have sufficed.

On his side, and quite unknown to himself, Frank was my good angel. If ever I was tempted to take more whiskey than was good for me, it was the thought that I could not bear to meet the reproachful look of my boy's honest eyes that made me leave the last glass untasted and go home to him sober. I was very hot-tempered, too, and at times, when put out, and about to give utterance to an oath or a foul word, the thought that it would pain me to hear such expressions issuing from my boy's lips induced me to leave them unspoken.

So the years sped on in which Frank Foster passed from childhood to youth, and I from youth to manhood; and undoubtedly, in the estimation of the public, we were the two favorite performers of Dash's circus.

I was considered first-rate on our large flying trapeze, and it was the desire of Frank's heart to perform on it with me. Old Jake, as we called the man who had done the business with me for years, was getting a little past his work, and was always saying he should be leaving the company one of these days; and Frank had gained permission to train for the place and succeed him when that day should come. But kind-hearted Mr. Dash would not hear of Jake's being supplanted until he was ready to go.

I longed for the day as eagerly as did Frank; for old Jake, although he was clever, was getting terribly lazy, and would always do as little as possible, while I and my boy, even while practising, always exerted our skill and strength to the utmost. Some nights, when there was a small "house," Jake used to suggest leaving out the "flying" part, and having merely a gymnastic performance on the one trapeze; then he would insist on having a safety-net underneath us, which was most galling to my pride—we had never had an accident, but it gave us the character of not being sure of ourselves. So I was glad when old Jake finally announced his intention of leaving us as we moved on towards the large city we were about to visit.

How glad Frank and I were when at length we saw ourselves placarded in scarlet letters, five inches deep, as "Damon and Pythias, in their Startling Flying Trapeze Act!" The names, I am told, were those of two men in the olden time who loved each other as Frank and I did. Not one whit better—I am sure of that!

In the large city we performed in an enormous amphitheatre. Frank and I were determined to have no safety-net. Mr. Dash demurred at first, but at length gave in to our urgent pleading. We knew that the appearance of danger increased the public interest and excitement; while, with my experience and strength, and Frank's courage, correct eye for distance, and quick ear for time, the risk was very small indeed. The least slip, however, was certain to be fatal, for never have I seen or heard of any one performing on the flying trapeze at such a height.

I was proud of my Frank as he entered the ring by my side that night, dressed as I was myself, in flesh-colored tights, with scarlet vest and boots. His curly hair tossed back, his eyes bright with excitement, his well-knit, slight figure formed a goodly picture to behold.

Then we ascended by our different ropes, and the performance began to the tender strains of the "Sweethearts" waltz. We were received with deafening applause; but when we had set ourselves, pendulum-like, in motion, the whole of the large audience held their breath; and a pin might have been heard to drop as Frank swung himself across that vast building, to be caught by my hands as I hung head downwards from the other trapeze, and then thrown back again at the returning swing. At the successful performance of this daring act, the enthusiastic shouts broke forth afresh. We positively enjoyed ourselves up there, the incense of praise making us show off our full powers.

A perfect shower of bouquets from the ladies fell around us as our feet touched the ground; and the manager, his face aglow with triumph, patted us both on the shoulder, saying:—

"Well, my boys, you have made a hit this time!"

We had three nights of unbounded success, and then came a reverse. Frank was endeavoring to train a young horse which had recently been bought. It was decidedly vicious, and he had to make good use of the whip. One morning he stumbled and fell, and the irritated animal seized Frank's arm with his teeth, and dragged the poor fellow along for some distance. He was found lying quite insensible, the flesh on his right shoulder and arm so cruelly torn and lacerated that he was conveyed to the hospital, where he remained five weeks.

Old Jake had taken his wife away with him. She was one of our lady-equestrians, and appeared in several riding-acts; a rather favorite performance with me was one in which I bore her round the ring, she standing on one foot, first on my knee, then on my shoulder, and finally held out at arm's length by her waist-belt only.

At one time Jake's wife used to be extremely good at it; but latterly she had grown so excessively stout that I felt the performance was becoming laughable.

Being unable to carry on this perform-

ance, and all the clever acts in which Frank took part being struck out of the programme, our resources became suddenly so limited that we found it quite difficult to present a good evening's entertainment. So Mr. Dash advertised for a clever young lady; and we soon heard that he had engaged one—Miss Coralie Davis, an accomplished young American.

She came—but how shall I describe her? She was the daintiest, most beautiful little fairy imaginable! I think that from the first day I saw her I worshiped her, and a new world seemed opening out before me—I had never been so happy before. I do not say I hoped for any return of affection. I was too dazed with this new experience to think of the future—the present was enough.

Strange as it may seem, although I was twenty-eight, I had never felt more than the merest passing fancy for any woman. As a rule, being extremely shy, I rather shunned the fair sex, and felt awkward and taciturn in their society; while our other young fellows were always having their fun with some girl or other.

Perhaps I was more in earnest when I did fall in love than a man can be who tears up his heart into fifty scraps, bestowing them on fifty objects.

I stood by, full of admiration, when "Mademoiselle Coralie" made her first appearance on the tight-rope; and when the time came for her performance with me—which we had already rehearsed—I trembled with suppressed emotion; and as she put her little hand about my neck to raise herself by, and I felt her long golden hair falling about my arm as I supported her, I thought I had never experienced such a thing as happiness before.

For more than a month did I enjoy this bliss, and in all that time I did not once speak to Coralie of love. She seemed too much like a gay, laughing sprite to be spoken to seriously on such a subject; and I was painfully aware of my own imperfections as a lover, in the eyes of a young and beautiful girl; so I was extremely shy when addressing her even on the most ordinary topics.

I went to see Frank as often as the rules of the hospital would allow; and, though I was sorry to find him feverish, restless, and suffering, it did not pain me as it would once have done. My love for Frank had

somehow receded into the background, and all other feelings seemed swallowed up in my mad adoration of Coralie.

After the first time that I had mentioned the fact that a new lady had joined us, I never spoke of her to my boy, though I related to him every incident concerning the other members of the company.

Then came the day when Frank was discharged from the hospital; but he was still too weak to do more than give the lightest assistance in the way of holding flags or hoops. On the first night that he saw Coralie he came up to me, saying:—

"Father George, you told me of the new lady, but you never said she was like that!"

"What do you mean? Like what?" I growled.

"Why, she is simply perfect!" he answered.

I turned from him angrily. How dared a boy like that give his opinion?

I did not now seek Frank's companionship in every leisure hour, but rather avoided it. Being of a somewhat morose and brooding temperament, I preferred to be alone, where I could think of Coralie without being disturbed.

I suppose this was how it came about that Frank's devotion to Coralie and the fact of their being nearly always in each other's company grew to be the subject of general chaff among the troupe long before it came to my knowledge. Once, when he began with boyish enthusiasm to sing her praises to me, I abruptly put an end to the conversation—it was more than I could bear; so he never started the topic again.

In this way week after week passed by; and it was an understood thing that they were acknowledged lovers before I had heard a word about it. I watched them secretly, and found that the stories that were floating about were all too true. Then all my life-long love for Frank seemed turned to bitterness; it seemed so cruel that the one being whom I had loved, trusted and cherished should turn round upon me and rob me of my heart's delight. I was too unreasoning in my jealousy to consider the fact that the boy could not know how I loved her, seeing that I would neither give him my confidence nor receive his. I was too keenly alive to my own personal inferiority to dream of entering the lists against him and endeavoring to hold my own, so I nursed my wrath, love, and hatred in silence.

Soon Frank said he was quite himself again, and ready to take his part in the performance once more; then came another blow for me.

The manager told me, as gently as was possible, but none the less firmly, that he wished to substitute Frank Foster for the trick-act with Mademoiselle Coralie. He said they were in better proportion, and that was always more pleasing to the eye. While with Jack's wife it had been a most clever act, I dwarfed Mademoiselle Coralie into insignificance. Frank was quite up to it, as he had done almost the same thing sometimes for the sake of variety with one of the small boys. So there was nothing for it but for me to withdraw and gnash my teeth in solitude.

The other men thought I was hurt about it, taking it as a slur upon me professionally; and I heard them say to each other:—

"Old Cook's out of temper, and the weather-glass has stood at 'stormy' for some time."

It has been my custom to loiter about at the entrance to the ring among the helpers whenever Frank was on; but seven times had he performed in my place with Coralie, and I had never seen the act. I knew I could not have borne the sight, and took care to go behind before they entered.

For some time we had bills posted advertising an especially good entertainment—our last in that town—under the patronage of a local grandee. All our best pieces were to be performed on that night. Every reserved seat was secured days before, and we expected a bumper house and a great triumph.

It was on this very night that the next blow fell upon me.

Half an hour before the commencement of the performance as soon as the doors were open, every corner, every unreserved seat was full, and hundreds of people were turned away disappointed. I was loitering about outside, smoking a pipe, when I was joined by Frank, who slipped his arm within mine and walked beside me.

"What ails you, dear old Father George?" he said. "I am afraid you have taken to heart my being put in your place with Coralie; you are a bit short with me about it. But I give you my word it was none of my doing, and I was as much put out about it as you could be. Don't let a trifle like that come between us! We have never fallen out before in all these years."

As I still kept silent, he went on:—

"Maybe you think I have neglected you of late. I wanted to confide in you once or twice, but somehow you would not let me. When it was all settled, however, I said to myself, 'Father George shall be the first to hear of my happiness.' Can't you guess what I am going to say? Coralie loves me as much as I do her, and yesterday she promised to be my wife. Wish me joy, old fellow!"

The perspiration stood in beads upon my forehead; I could not restrain my passion, and answered him almost savagely:—

"Boy, are you mad? What are you thinking of? I will not allow it! It shall never be! What do you propose to keep a wife upon? Oh, am I never to win love for myself? Must some one always rob me of it? Base, wicked, ungrateful boy!"

Frank evidently thought that I was alluding to his love for me, as he showed by his next words.

"I am afraid I have been selfish, and have not thought enough of you in this matter. I see how you must feel. I know how, in your place, I should have dreaded the interference of a third party, and have feared it would end our close friendship; but indeed, indeed it is not so! You don't know Coralie—she is so sweet, you cannot but love her, and you will really gain; for you shall be 'Father George' to her too, as you have been so long to me."

"For heaven's sake, say no more, Frank!" I answered, my heart full of resentment at his so calmly ignoring the possibility of my feeling anything but fatherly love for Coralie. "Do you know that there are only seven short years between us? It is childish of you to call me 'Father George.' You must give her up; I insist upon your obeying me."

"You contradict yourself," said Frank. "In one breath you tell me I am no longer a child; in the next you wish to exact the unreasoning obedience of one. I am not ungrateful—I do not forget all you have been to me through childhood and boyhood; I do not forget that I owe my life to you. In return, to prove the sincerity of my gratitude, if I had known of your objections only yesterday, I would have made the sacrifice you ask; and gone out alone into the world, for I could not have remained near her another hour without telling her of my love. It would have broken my heart, but I would

have done it for your sake all the same; it is too late now, however. I have spoken to her and won her promise. I cannot go back from my word."

"How very noble of you," I sneered, mad jealousy destroying every good feeling in me," to talk of wonderful sacrifices that you would have made if this and the other had not happened, and then to say it is too late! A cheap way of paying your debt of gratitude indeed! But I say it is not too late; and, mark my words, boy, it shall never be!" So saying, I turned away, and ended the interview.

The entertainment was in full swing when accidentally I found myself standing face to face with Coralie, ready dressed for her tight-rope dancing, which was to come next. Her beauty, instead of softening me, only maddened me the more, and I grasped her by the arm, saying wildly:—

"What folly is this I hear about your marrying Frank Foster? Tell him to-night that you will not, or it may be the worse for you both."

"Oh, Mr. Cook, you are hurting my arm! What is the matter with you? I do not understand. Frank said you were so good and kind, and would be sure to befriend us. I know we are poor; but that does not matter. We love each other, and we can afford to wait," she said, the tears that filled her eyes only adding fresh beauty to her face.

"You will not release him? Then you must take the consequences!" I hissed out between my clenched teeth.

I stood and watched her on the tight-rope—then through the trick-act with Frank; I could not tear myself away from the fascination of watching that which gave me so much misery. I acknowledged bitterly to myself what a well-matched couple they made, both full of life and youth. I stood there like an evil spirit, with hands and teeth tightly clenched, while the evil passions of jealousy and hatred filled my heart.

I realized that night for the first time that Frank was no longer a boy, but a man, with a man's hopes and aims. Ah, but it was bitter to stand by and see her go through it all as she had done with me, her hand on his neck, her hair falling against his cheek as it had against mine. The spectators were delighted, and clapped their hands enthusiastically.

That scene was over, and others had succeeded; the clowns had surpassed them-

selves in wit and merriment; and I was still standing brooding, and quite unconscious of time; when Frank tapped me on the shoulder, and his cheery voice broke in upon my reverie.

"Come, George, time to dress for the trapeze; we must look sharp!"

I started violently, and passed my hand across my face as I followed him, half fearing my evil thoughts would be written on my forehead.

This was the first appearance of "Damon and Pythias" since Frank's accident, and Mr. Dash suggested the use of the safety-net as a precautionary measure; but we scorned the notion, as before.

The finishing touch was put to my hatred by Coralie. As we ran past her to enter the ring, she touched Frank's arm and whispered, with the love-light in her eyes:—

"Be careful, dearest, for my sake!"

That voice—those eyes—all his! Not a look, not a thought for me or my safety! Oh, it was more than I could bear!

We each ascended by different ropes to our respective trapezes. We had gone through the preliminaries, and now the great act was to take place. The sweet strains of the "Sweethearts" waltz were waiving through the building:—

"Love for a year, a week, a day,

But alas for the love that loves always!"

Three times had I swung backwards and forwards with my head downwards, and at the next turn of the swing Frank would throw himself into my extended hands.

It was while I was hanging thus that the black demon of murder first entered heart and brain. If I had had ten seconds for thought, I should have come to my senses; but it was now or never.

What demon had prompted Frank to remind me, on this night of all nights, that he owed his life to me? What demon whispered to me, with wily sophistry, that, since that was so, his life was mine to give or take at pleasure, and he would be my debtor for many years of youth and happiness? It took but a second; my resolution was formed. Tightening the muscles of my legs in an imperceptible manner, and drawing up my shoulders to shorten my arms, I waited to receive him, knowing full well that those few inches would make the difference between life and death.

How can I find words to describe what followed? For just a brief second Frank's

finger-tips touched mine, then slipped past. I saw him clutch the air convulsively; I saw the look of horror in his blue eyes as he fell; I heard the sharp, despairing cry that he gave, which was immediately taken up by the assembled multitude, and broke out as one mighty voice. Not a soul there but swelled the hideous chorus. Then through it all and above it all, there reached me the dull, sickening thud of a human body falling from a great height.

How I gained a sitting posture and descended by the rope I do not know. But at last I stood on the ground—the madness passed—sobered—and a murderer!

And what a scene of confusion followed! Several women had fainted; others were in hysterics; while three or four gentlemen among the audience came forward and announced themselves as belonging to the medical profession. But what could they do? There could be no hope for Frank. The first glance told them that the spinal cord was broken.

By and by the crowd dispersed, the lights were put out, and quiet reigned once more.

A great deal was said in the local newspapers for some time on the subject, and good old Mr. Dash was severely censured for allowing anything so obviously dangerous to take place in his circus for the sake of enhancing its attractions. The young man, they said, had been absent through illness for some time, and this was his first reappearance in the part, when, either from having lost nerve or his being out of practice, the tragedy occurred. They hoped it would be a caution for the future, etc.

The inquest was held, a verdict of accidental death was returned, and no one raised a question on the subject or cast a doubt upon me.

And now a strange thing happened. From the moment my soul was steeped in guilt my passion for Coralie died, while all my love for Frank came back with tenfold strength, and I knew myself to be a treacherous madman. Even after our quarrel the lad had trusted his life in my hands, and I had proved unworthy of the trust.

If he had fallen in a fair fight, where he would have had a chance of defending himself, I should have felt it less. But I felt then that no darker story blotted the annals of history than the story of the crime I had perpetrated.

For some days I was in a prostrate condi-

tion, alternating between stupor and delirium. Whatever wild incoherent ravings I may have uttered were all put down to the shock I had received to my nerves; and all the members of our company were most kind to me, pitying me from the bottom of their hearts for the loss of the only being I had ever seemed to love.

As soon as it was possible, we left that town for another at some distance. There were no longer a "Damon and Pythias," but, instead, I saw myself advertised, in black on green, as "The Wonderful Flying Man, the Greatest Marvel of the Age."

In our line of life there is no time to indulge in useless sorrow; whatever happens, business must be attended to if we would not starve, and the exigencies of life crowd out the memories of the past. So Frank, though much regretted at first, was soon forgotten by all except the one man who loved him so, and was his murderer.

Coralie was quite broken-hearted, but she left us to return to her own country.

The "Flying Man" was successful for many nights; then there came a time when, as ill-luck would have it, the band began to play the "Sweethearts" waltz. By the association of sound, the whole scene was reproduced with vivid accuracy to my mind. Once again I felt the passing touch of those warm fingers; once again I saw the noble young face at arm's length from my own, and heard the shriek he gave as he descended to his fate.

I should have made some nimble gyrations at this point; but I stayed trembling and clinging to the rope, with eyes staring into space.

The ring-master soon saw that something was wrong, and signalled to me to come down. I was borne away in a half-fainting condition, while the manager apologized to the public for their disappointment, regretting that the sudden indisposition of the "Flying Man" rendered it impossible for him to continue his performance.

Mr. Dash saw that this could not be allowed to go on, and I saw it too. A doctor was consulted, and he declared it was a shock to the nervous system from which I was suffering; and doubtless he was right. He suggested that for a time I should take part only in performances that required strength, but no nerve; until I recovered.

Some of the men whispered that old Cook had taken to drink since his boy's death; and

sometimes I was tempted to exceed my daily allowance, hoping that I might by that means lose sight of the haunting face for a time. But it did not answer; it set my head on fire, and instead of one haunting face there were fifty surrounding me, with agonized despairing eyes.

I felt that my only chance was to leave the profession, and hoped vainly that, by separating myself from everything that could remind me of my crime, I might have a respite from the torment of my conscience.

No one will ever know what I endured in those months that followed, I could not banish the form and face of Frank from my mind. The days were bad enough; but, oh, the terror of the nights, in which, if I fell asleep, it was only to wake with a start, and find myself trembling, while out of the shadows and darkness fifty gibing demons would clutch at my throat, mouthing to each other, "He is ours! He is ours!" And among these—behind them, above them, always, everywhere—was Frank's face and reproachful eyes!

No wonder that it was a positive relief to me when at last I had tramped back to this town where the deed was done, and had given myself up to justice, my only anxiety then being that my sentence should be death, not penal servitude. For did I not know that the demons and Frank and my conscience would find space to slip into my cell with me?

Oh, Frank, Frank, are you not avenged? However foul my crime, have I not suffered enough for that one moment of madness?

The good chaplain has been with me for a long time, helping me to make my peace with an offended God.

He came to bring me the news that all appeals on my behalf had proved futile, and that I must now prepare for the worst; and I thanked him for the news. He has promised to take charge of this confession, and correct the mistakes which my ignorance may have made.

Perhaps to-morrow morning, when I am led forth to look for the last time upon earth and sky, and I see the hangman ready for his hateful office, I may for a minute feel, as the bravest might do, the natural physical shrinking from a violent death. But I think I shall be believed when I say that I would not have the sentence reversed for all the world.

PAGANINI.

TOWARDS the close of the last century, an Italian woman of Genoa had a dream, and it seemed to her, as she afterward told her little son, as though white-winged seraphs approached her couch and predicted the advent of a child whose skill as a violinist would be so transcendent that the very spirits of earth and air would seem to acknowledge his sway. The child was Nicolo Paganini, the destined Hercules of the violin, born February 18, 1784.

Ere the poor little lad could plainly speak, his days of toil began. No sooner could he hold a violin, than his father proved himself an inexorable taskmaster; the boy was urged to intense and even dangerous application; rare precocity was stimulated by privation of food; and thus the sickly child developed into a suffering man. It was in 1793 that Paganini made his first public appearance at Genoa, and played a series of variations on the air *La Carmagnole*, which had everywhere accompanied the victorious banners of the French Republic. Up to fifteen he remained quiescent under the yoke of his avaricious and tyrannical parent; but no sooner did he find in the exercise of his wondrous talent a means of delivery from the house of bondage, than he broke wildly from all restraint, and plunged into every form of dissipation, indulging especially in gambling, a universal vice in Italy, as it was, indeed, throughout the whole of Europe. Pitted against past masters of the craft, Paganini's means were rapidly exhausted. Jewels, watch, rings, even his fiddle, were disposed of; and he was indebted to the kindness of a French gentleman for the loan of a favorite Guarnerius, upon which he ever afterwards played, to enable him to fulfill an engagement at a concert at Leghorn. On this occasion Paganini performed a series of most difficult studies, which he had composed in still earlier years, and his skill was rewarded with triumphant applause. "Never again," replied the enthusiastic Frenchman, as the young artist hastened to return the violin, "will I profane the strings which your fingers have touched; that instrument is yours." This was the violin which Paganini bequeathed to his native town of Genoa, where it is still shown under a glass case in the municipal palace.

In 1805 Paganini accepted the position of director of music and conductor of the orchestra in the service of the Princess Maria, afterwards Grand-duchess of Tuscany, sister of Napoleon, and wife of Bacciochi; and it was at this period of his early career that he first elaborated many of those peculiarities, such as performances upon one string, which afterwards became so characteristic of his style. At Ferrara he had a narrow escape from being lynched. It had been arranged that a certain Signora Marcolini should take part in his concert, but at the last she left him in the lurch, and a danseuse with a pretty voice was good enough to come to the rescue. Nevertheless, the disappointed public hissed and hooted her down, and Paganini resolved to be avenged. At the close of the concert he proposed to amuse the audience by imitating on the violin the sounds of various animals. Having reproduced the mewing of a cat, the barking of a dog, the crowing of a cock, etc., he suddenly burst forth into a perfect imitation of the donkey's bray; and the musician bowed once again, as he added, with his cynical smile: "This for those who hissed before and laughed." The result was electrical. The Ferrarese—who enjoyed a widespread reputation for stupidity—took the joke as especially personal to themselves; in a moment the pit rose to a man, charged through the orchestra, scaled the stage, and would have killed Paganini had he not precipitately fled. One evening, at a concert in Leghorn, he came upon the stage limping from the effects of a nail which had run into his foot, and there was some tittering among the audience. Just as he was beginning to play the candles fell out of his music desk, and once more there was an uproar. Suddenly the first string broke, and the merriment waxed yet louder; but, to use the words in which he naively told the story of himself, "I played the piece on three strings, and the sneers quickly changed into boisterous applause."

Early in 1828 Paganini, at the request of Prince Metternich, for the first time visited Vienna. Men and women of all classes of society went mad about him; verses were poured forth in his honor, snuff-boxes and cigar-cases displayed his portrait; gloves, rings, stockings, coats, everything in the

shop-windows was a la Paganini; a good stroke at billiards was called "un coup a la Paganini;" dishes were named after him; and an enthusiastic cabman, who drove him to his concerts, besought of him permission to paint his cab in the Italian colors and to print upon it the words, "Cabriolet de Paganini." These extraordinary successes, however, served only to give new currency to the tales of crime and *diablerie*, which had so often circulated in connection with him. To atone for the base assassination of a rival, it was said that he had passed years within the walls of a dungeon, with nothing but his violin to mitigate the rigors of captivity. He was a captain of banditti—a deadly duellist—in league with the Prince of Darkness. In England some of the people who thronged his passage to and from the theatre sought to discover, by touching him, whether he were really a being of flesh and blood; and an Italian lady who followed him one evening to the stage door, where his cab stood in readiness, hesitated not to avow that his feet never touched the ground, and that he was borne away through the air in a chariot of fire, drawn by a pair of black horses! Yet all the stories told of him were not unpleasing, for there were many who regarded him as an angelic being, whose mission it was to vouchsafe to mortals some foretaste of the heavenly harmonies which will be hereafter; while others spoke of a choir of sweet-toned spirits hidden within the instrument as he played. One day, as he walked in the streets of Vienna, Paganini saw a poor boy scraping some Neapolitan airs before the windows of a great house. Instantly crossing the road, the great artist entered into conversation with him, and ascertained that he maintained a sick and widowed mother by his scanty earnings as an itinerant musician. Taking the boy's fiddle and bow, Paganini commenced to play. A crowd rapidly collected; and when he concluded the performance, he handed round the hat, and made a collection, which he presented to the young Italian, amid the cheers of all assembled, remarking as he did so, "I hope I've done a good turn to that little animal."

The singular personality of Paganini was displayed no less conspicuously in private than in artistic life. His existence alternated between excitement and exhaustion. He would sit sometimes for hours wrapped in moody silence, and at other times surren-

der himself to the wildest effervescence of gayety. Full of contradictions, he was especially talkative when traveling; and though, latterly, the delicacy of his lungs affected his voice, he loved to talk loud and fast when the rattle of the wheels over the pavement was most deafening. He journeyed with the utmost speed from place to place, and to the charms of scenery or the strange sights of foreign towns was equally insensible. In the hottest weather he would wrap a furred pelisse round him, and huddle himself up in a corner of the carriage, with every window closed. Arrived at his hotel, he would have all the windows open, and called it taking an air-bath. But he never ceased to anathematize the climates of Germany and France, and declared that Italy was the only country fit to live in. Soup or a cup of chocolate was all that he took before commencing a day's journey; and at night a light supper, or oftentimes a cup of chamomile tea, was sufficient for his needs. The conqueror of Scinde himself had no greater contempt for a superfluity of baggage than Paganini. A coat, a few changes of linen, and a hat-box—a carpet-bag and a shabby trunk, wherein traveled his beloved Guarnerius, his jewels, and his money—constituted the whole of his impedimenta. His papers and accounts were thrust into a small red pocket-book in most admired disorder. He was all but ignorant of arithmetic; and his business calculations, though sufficiently accurate, were effected by methods purely original. Of general knowledge, in fact, he had little or none; books to him were a *terra incognita*, and political events devoid of interest. To himself, he was the only important fact everywhere, and the newspapers he read merely for the sake of what might concern him. In his own quarters Paganini maintained the strictest solitude, and lounged on a sofa the greater part of the day. Save at concerts, and occasionally at rehearsals, his violin was never touched; he had worked enough, he would say, and the season for repose was come.

Through the events of his German campaign, where Prague, Dresden, Berlin, and Warsaw were in succession visited, we may not follow him, but will rejoin him at Paris, where, on the 9th of March, 1831, he gave his first concert at the Opera House. Paganini was then forty-seven years old, and his appearance was likened to that of some shadow from the demon world. A lean,

gaunt, haggard figure, with wan, thin face, framed in long black hair, straggling down over his shoulders, and with a strange, scornful smile hovering ever about his lips, he shuffled forward from the side-scenery to the footlights. The impression which he created on his first appearance is described as a "positive and universal frenzy," and at the close of each piece the whole audience rose *en masse* to recall him.

About the middle of May Paganini left Paris for London, and on the 3d of June he gave his first concert at the King's Theatre. Though the indescribable enthusiasm created by his playing is said to have been somewhat damped by the extravagant prices charged for admission, Paganini's tour through London and the provinces brought him a golden harvest; and it was calculated that, on one occasion, at Winchester, his own part of the performance, for which he received the sum of two hundred pounds, occupied just twenty-eight minutes. His greatest triumph, however, was probably achieved at Lord Holland's, when he was requested to improvise upon his violin the story of a son who, after murdering his father, leapt into a bottomless abyss with the girl who refused to listen to the story of his love. Paganini stipulated for darkness; and so weird was the musical interpretation of the story that had been proposed to him that many of the ladies fainted; and with the return of light, the scene in the concert chamber was likened to the appearance of a battlefield cumbered with the bodies of the slain! There is reason to believe that the proceeds of the performances in England amounted to twenty-four thousand pounds.

The remainder of his story is quickly told. Broken in health, and having acquired a

large fortune by the exercise of his art, he bought, among other property in his native Italy, a charming country-seat near Parma, where, though he occasionally played at concerts, chiefly for the benefit of the poor, he spent two or three years in comparative retirement. In 1836, however, he was induced to lend his name to the establishment of a gambling-room and concert-hall in Paris, called the Casino Paganini. The undertaking unfortunately proved a failure; and the fatigue of the journey which, in consequence of law proceedings, he was compelled to make to Paris, without doubt hastened his end. Fearing the effect of a northern winter, his medical advisers recommended him to return to the south; and after a painful journey through France, he at length arrived at Nice, where, on the 27th of May, 1840, he quietly passed away. The last evening of his life he would have no light in his room; but on suddenly awaking out of a peaceful sleep, he drew aside the curtains of his bed and gazed forth into the unclouded glory of an Italian night. His window was open, and the whispering of the breeze among the trees seemed to rouse within him the longing to render back again to nature somewhat of the sweet sensations she was bestowing upon him in that final hour. Yet, though the moon had risen and was pouring a flood of radiance across the bed, to him everything seemed in shadow, for his eyes were dim. He extended his hand and grasped the beloved violin—the faithful friend which had so often been the soother of his troubles—and strove to bring some sound out of the instrument. But the magic power had forever quitted his fingers, and falling back upon his pillow, he expired.

BY THE SEA.

BY SUSANNA JONES.

ON silver-sanded shore we stray,
And watch the sparkling waters play;
Still leaping up, they still recede
With fairy flights of shell and weed.

The arch of heav'n, serene and grand,
Smiles on the beauty of the land,
And dimpled waves that fall or rise
Reflect the sunshine of the skies.

From riven ledge or guarded height
Young ferns and thrift are flowing bright;
And o'er the cliffs around her nest
The sea-gull wheels with snowy breast.

Far o'er the ocean's bosom wide
Like living things the vessels glide,

And fearless dare the stormy gale
With stately mast or flowing sail.

It is a day whereon the soul
Escapes from earth's too close control,
And feels a thrill of new delight
In all things beautiful and bright.

We turn from business cares away,
Seeking a restful holiday,
New thoughts to wake, new hopes to find,
To gird and brace the wearied mind.

Then, as we leave the pressing crowd,
The voices shrill, the music loud,
We all our cares and plans release,
And hold calm Nature's gift of peace.

AUNT SAREPTA'S GHOST.

BY BLANCHE SHAW.

BEFORE I begin my tale, let me inform my good readers that the ghost in question is not the visible spiritual part of the respected and respectable relative whose name forms the larger part of the title of this article. It was hers only by right of discovery; not by unity of essence.

The prologue over, now to the story. It was Christmas Eve, and we were all gathered around the blazing fire in the sitting-room. By all I mean my father and mother, sister, and brother Harry, who had just come home for his Christmas holidays, and Aunt Sarepta. As Aunt Sarepta is to be the centre figure of this picture, I think she is entitled to a more particular introduction than the rest; and I will endeavor to place her before you as faithfully as I can. She was a spinster of such uncertain, or rather impossible age that no one, not even my father, who was her own brother, could give an opinion on it. My curiosity had prompted me more than once to question him on the subject, and his reply invariably was:—

"Sarepta's age! really, my child, I can't say. She was grown up long before months and years had any meaning for me, and—let me see—I don't think I ever heard of her having a birthday. Bless me, child! I don't know how old she is."

Her age was as hopelessly lost as the record of dark ages, but her face and form were patent to all; and let me try to do justice to them.

First, we'll take her face—no, we won't; we'll take her cap. That cap of caps which towered above all modern millinery. It was made of lace: for home wear, black; for company and Sunday, white. The crown was large, and stood out boldly from her head, displaying beneath it a little knot of carrot-colored hair about the size of a walnut, which was firmly skewered to the back of her head. The cap had a cape which went around it, met under the chin, and hung down almost to her shoulders. It was also of lace, very thin in the main, and letting her neck shine through; but the bottom was trimmed with a broad ruche of scarlet ribbon, which gave her the appearance of a turkey gobbler with his gills flapping. The front was the masterpiece, being sur-

rounded by a ruche like the cape, the part at the cheek increasing in size till it looked like two cabbage roses. This was her cap, and next comes her face. Her hair, I have said, was carrotly and not very plentiful. Her skin, possibly from a love of harmony, had tried to assume the same hue, and with fair success. Her eyes were gray, neither large nor lustrous, rather sharp than otherwise. Her nose was remarkable for its faithful adherence to the old Roman type; and her chin was sharp enough to split rocks as effectually as the beak of that wonderful bird of old was said to do. Her mouth was large, lips thin, and when they opened displayed a row of teeth whose ghastly whiteness reminded one of the tusks of the dragon. This was my aunt's face; and now to her figure. It won't take long, for there was not much of it to speak of; for though it was exceedingly tall and scraggy, it was so lean that the joints of her spine showed painfully through her dress in the summer time, for which reason she always sat upright in her chair, saving, thereby, bones, dry goods and the upholstery.

This was our aunt as she sat that night, grim as the figure of Fate, a little outside our circle. I said that Harry had just returned from school. Of course he was the lion of the group, which dignity he bore bravely, entertaining us with accounts of school pranks and frolics, of which he was always the hero. We young ones listened with open-mouthed devotion, applauding with such exclamations as "Good, Harry! That was right! That was splendid!" whenever an instance of his particular cleverness or bravery was delicately mentioned. The evening passed rapidly away, and at last the clock struck eleven, when Harry, who had been silent a short time, said, suddenly:—

"O girls, I did not tell you about the ghost, did I?"

"No!" we both cried in a breath. "A ghost! do tell of it. What is it?"

"That is just what they all ask," said he, "and no one yet has been able to solve the problem. It is a little short, stumpy fellow, all white. He goes prowling through the hall as the clock strikes twelve. No one knows where he comes from or where he

goes to. They have spoken to it, but it won't answer. One man tried to catch it, but it slipped through his fingers, leaving a blue sulphurous smoke curling around them."

"My good gracious!" we exclaimed, and drew closer together.

Aunt Sarepta looked at Harry severely, and then opening her mouth, so that her white teeth glittered with a ghastliness that made me shiver still more, she said, sternly:—

"Harry, are you not ashamed to terrify your sisters with such sinful levity?"

"Sinful levity, aunty! I assure you, it is true."

Aunt Sarepta's teeth retreated behind the barrier of her thin, pale lips, which arranged themselves in a smile of contemptuous incredulity; and Harry answered, with spirit:—

"You may laugh as much as you please, aunt, now; but if the ghost should once favor you with a call, I'm afraid you would not think it quite so amusing. Your cry would be, 'Oh, give me the legs of my youth!'"

I am sorry to say that neither Harry's tone nor words were as respectful as the age and dignity of his relative demanded; but the glow and dazzle of "just come home" hung fresh upon him; and, besides, the fact of anyone having the hardihood to speak in such terms to Aunt Sarepta so stunned all of us that, had we felt the inclination, we had not the power to reprove him. But Aunt Sarepta came bravely to her own defence.

"And what do you suppose will be your cry, sir, when you are called to give account for your shortcomings, to separate your tares from the wheat, eh?—what do you think of that?"

Papa gave Harry a warning look, but the spirit of mischief and opposition was up in him, and he replied:—

"I'd stand it as well, aunty, as you would, if you should meet the ghost. Come, tell us what you think you would do."

"I never think on impossibilities. A ghost is one."

"But the witch of Endor?"

"She called up the dead by the help of the Evil One; and should he, by the blackness and depravity of my poor sinful nature, ever gain such dominion over me as to send one of his emissaries into my presence, I

would advance boldly to it, seize it with one hand, and, while I held my Bible in the other, bid it, by the Power that cast its master from Paradise, to quit my sight."

During this discourse my aunt had gesticulated freely, going through the acting part of her imaginary triumph with zest. At the close her arm remained outstretched, and her skinny forefinger pointed at Harry, as though he were, not the presumptuous spirit, but the prince of darkness himself. But, all undaunted, he replied:—

"Good, good, aunt! that's the way to fetch them. What do you say to going back with me, and having a tussle with this old codger? Provide yourself with a pair of fire-proof gloves, you know, before you begin. Are you sure, now, that when you came to the scratch you wouldn't flunk just a little?"

But aunt deigned this irreverent remark no reply; she dropped her arm, and turning to my father, said:—

"James, pray, pray in bitterness of spirit for that boy. I see perdition written on his brow. I shall wrestle in spirit for him in my devotions to-night." And with these words she arose, lighted the candle, and left the room.

Aunt Sarepta's room was a large chamber at the opposite end of the house from that occupied by the other members of the family. It was furnished in a style peculiar to, and very much like herself; one of its features being a heavily-curtained bed, to which, in a measure, she was indebted for the match between her hair and skin, and to which she clung like a knight to his spurs, in spite of the suggestions of her friends, and the orders of her physician. She also had a stove in it, which in winter she kept at a red heat. In my days of wickedness I used to say it was to keep constantly before her a comforting picture of the state of the lost; and also to have herself a little bit in training, if in the end she should discover that she was elected on the wrong side.

I said the room was large. The bed stood at one end, and the stove at the other. Aunt Sarepta went to the stove end, put her candle on a little stand which held her Bible and hymn-book, and began to disrobe. First, she took off her cap and produced a remarkable result of starch and ruffles, called her nightcap. How she ever managed to sleep in that cap is a problem sealed up with her age; the crown must have extended

fully six inches beyond her head, and the washerwoman declares she has never once found the starch in it broken. Perhaps she lay on her side, some one will say. No, she could not have done that, for the fluted ruffle set around her face like a row of spikes, that would have worn her meagre cheeks bare in one night's rest, or rather unrest. No, it is useless to investigate. The thing is a mystery, a hopeless, helpless mystery, and I give it up. Aunt Sarepta proceeded to put on this cap; but just as she held the string beneath her chin, she sneezed. Now, a sneeze to Aunt Sarepta was a serious thing, for in its "hollow sound" she heard "cold, influenza, rheumatic pains, mustard drafts, and cold weak tea," brought up by a frowsy servant. "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." So thought Aunt Sarepta. She laid the cap aside with a sigh, and took from a bureau drawer a large square piece of red flannel, which she wrapped and rolled around her head several times, and finally tied under her chin. This done to her satisfaction, she said to herself:—

"I guess I'll steam my feet; that generally takes out influensy."

She looked into the kettle that was boiling on the stove, and saw it held water enough for the operation; she brought out her foot-tub and mustard, and prepared the bath. She then finished disrobing herself, and put a short calico sack and yellow flannel petticoat over her nightdress; she next took a patchwork quilt, in which a green eagle was represented surrounded by huge red hearts and livers, in tantalizing proximity to his beak, from the press. She put this over the chair, and then drew it close to the fire, seated herself, rolled the quilt tightly around her, plunged her feet into the water, and began to steam.

Oh, that some poor but talented artist, unseen, could have sketched my aunt as she sat there! The flannel bound tightly around her brow, her nose standing out grandly, and the sharp angles of her knees threatening to come through the quilt and separate the eagle's head from his body. She sat a few minutes gazing into the fire, ever and anon nodding her head as if in approval of her thoughts, till at length she put out her hand, and taking her hymn book from the stand, she began to read.

Now, when Aunt Sarepta read her hymn book she was always powerfully exercised;

and when powerfully exercised, she always gave audible vent to her feelings. Consequently, she read her hymns in a monotonous, half-crying voice, dwelling louder or longer on those words that particularly comforted or distressed her. This night "When I can read my title clear" seemed the balm most blessed to her need. She read it over several times, and was dwelling with unusual energy on the line "Then I can smile at Satan's rage," when a sound behind her caused her to look around, and by the faint light of the flickering dip, she beheld a sight that froze the blood in her veins and the words on her lips. The curtains of her bed were parted, and in the opening stood a frightful thing, all snow-white except the eyes, which, like two glowing coals, were fixed upon her. Aunt Sarepta stiffened and grew cold, and froze fast to the chair; she could not move, speak, or even turn her head away from that frightful gaze, which seemed piercing her through and through.

"Where! where was Roderick," or rather Roderick's courage, then? Her Bible lay close beside her on the stand, but no hand was outstretched to seize it. It was powerless even to hold the hymn book, which dropped from her fingers into the foot-tub with a loud splash. She noise seemed to arouse the horrid thing. It moved its head from side to side, and then, O horror of horrors! it slid to the floor, and walked with slow and solemn step straight to Sarepta. Nearer and nearer it came, its eyes glowing, its mouth open, showing its ghastly teeth and fiery tongue. A few steps from her he paused, looked at her with a fiendish grin, and then slowly swung into view a long tail. O Heaven above! it was the Evil One come to seize her for her sinful boasting! The fumes of brimstone already filled her nostrils. With one wild yell she sprang from her seat, upsetting both the foot-tub and the kettle of boiling water which sat beside her, whose contents fell over her naked feet. The pain brought forth another yell; but at that moment the thing again approached, uttering low growls, and she plunged forward, to trip over the dragging quilt, and fall headlong on the floor, while the demon, with a cry of triumph, sprang on her prostrate body, and lapped her face with his tongue. Shriek after shriek burst from Sarepta as she struggled with her enemy, who now uttered sharp cries and lashed her with his tail.

"O Lord, have mercy on me, lost sinner! Help! help! Will no one save me from the fiend? Save me! save me from the lake of fire!"

At this moment the door burst open, and the household, headed by my father, appeared. "What is the matter?" all cried in one voice; but no answer came. My aunt had committed the only weakness ever known of her; she had fainted. As the door opened, the thing had left her and stood in the shadow; but the moment it saw Harry it ran to him and sprang upon him.

"Why, halloo, Foxy!" he cried. "How did you come here?" And then he burst out laughing. My mother, who had been leaning over my aunt, looked up severely.

"I can't help it, mother, indeed I can't; but Aunt Sarepta has seen a ghost. It is too good! I bought that dog as a present to father. I did not want to show it until tomorrow, and it seems he has got in here and played ghost for Aunt Sarepta. Oh, it is too good! The Douglass vanquished in his hall! Up, Fox!" And Fox rose on his hind legs, and walked gravely to the side of his victim. The effect was irresistible, and, in spite of the senseless form on the floor, the room rang with laughter.

Aunt Sarepta revived under the proper treatment, but her scalds were very severe, and kept her prisoner a long time. On her recovery two changes were noticeable in her tastes: the banishment of her bed-curtains, and a reticence on the subject of ghosts.

ALL'S FAIR IN WAR.

BY W. H. MACY.

MY grandfather, like most old sailors, was fond of recalling the incidents of his active life, and spinning them into yarns for the delight of us youngsters. I have thought, since I grew older, that the dear old man may have embellished them a little, or at least that, as the phrase goes, a story lost nothing in his telling. I try to remember, as nearly as I can, his account of how he was taken prisoner by the British letter-of-marque, which he always declared was strictly true.

When the war with England broke out in 1812, I was round Cape Horn, on my second voyage as a boat-steerer, in the old *Belinda*, or "B'lindy," as she was generally called, with Captain Hezekiah Starbuck. Of course we heard about the war, and a great many wild rumors about the British naval fleets coming round into the Pacific, and British privateers fitting out for Yankee prizes on the whaling-grounds; but we never knew how much to believe or disbelieve of these wild stories. So we kept steadily about our business, which was to fill the *Belinda* with sperm oil, though we knew we must take a fearful hazard in trying to run the gauntlet of the enemy's cruisers on our passage home.

Well, the old ship was getting deep in the water with her greasy cargo, and wanted only three hundred barrels to fill her up, when we found ourselves one fine morning in sight of Charles's Island, one of the Galapagos, and soon after lowered away for whales, of which many were in sight within a circle of a few miles. I belonged to the larboard boat, which was commanded by Absalom Hussey, our chief mate, a man of great resolution, immense physical strength, and a temper, which, when roused, carried all before it. We got separated from the other boats, and fastened to a lively forty-barrel bull, which carted us away several miles to leeward before the mate got a good fatal lance at him; but at last the victory was ours, and our whale turned his broadside up to the sun, while our hurrahs rent the air.

There was a ship in sight, heading on a wind directly at us, but this was rather a pleasant circumstance. He was a whaler, of course, and we felt the true whaler's delight in aggravating our rivals by a show of our good luck. So we cut a hole in the whale's nib, and, coiling our line down all ready for streaming, we had nothing more to do but wait for the *Belinda* to run down to us. She was still keeping her luff

as the captain and second mate were fast to another whale, which had run to windward. We were all sitting or lounging at our ease in the boat, watching the strange ship.

"Doesn't look like any Nantucket or Bedford ship that I know," said Absalom, as he stood up on the stern-sheets and straightened his gigantic frame to its full height. "I thought I knew about all the ships on the ground; but this one is a stranger, a new-comer. She has got some oil, though, by the look of her waist."

"It seems to me," said I, "that her bows and head have rather a British look."

"Just so," asserted the giant, with his eyes steadily and keenly fixed upon her. "And the hoist of her topsails don't look natural for any Yankee whaler. I think I can see quarter-galleries when she yaws a little; and—yes, by thunder! I can see ports. But she may be an old man-of-war turned into a whaler. Ports and whale-boats don't belong together in any of our country's ships, nohow."

"Well," I observed, "it doesn't matter much, anyway. Even if she is an English whaler, we needn't trouble ourselves, I suppose. There's room enough in the Pacific Ocean for both of us to pursue our business without quarreling."

"So there is," answered the mate; "but I haven't much opinion of John Bull's politeness when he thinks all the advantages are on his side. He may take it into his noddle to steal our whale, and say all's fair in war-time. And if he is the strongest, we can't help ourselves."

As the ship drew near us, we could see that she was much larger than any of our Nantucket whalers, and had six ports on each side, with guns mounted in some of them, at least. But her mastheads were manned after the usual manner of whalers, and there were no more men to be seen on her deck than might have belonged to any four-boat ship. On she came, altering her course just enough to run clear of our whale, and the captain, standing on the quarter-rail, saluted us with:—

"Boat ahoy! What ship are you from?"

"The B'lindy, of Nantucket," roared Absalom Hussey. "What ship is that?"

"The Allahabad, of London," was the answer. "Cast off from your whale, and come alongside when I luff to."

"What?" demanded our mate, doubtful of his own ears.

"Leave your whale, and come alongside!" was called again, louder than before.

"Can't stop!" yelled Absalom. "Much obliged t'ye all the same."

By this time the ship had passed us so far that the skipper used his speaking-trumpet to repeat his order.

"If you don't come alongside I'll open fire upon you!"

"Fire, and be hanged!" shouted our Hercules, in a voice that must have been heard on board, for it was louder than the trumpet's hail.

"Now what sort of a mean trick is he up to? For I don't s'pose this is a friendly invitation, though I thought it was, the first time he spoke. The Alley— What did he say her name was?"

"Allahabad," said I. "It's an East-Indian name."

"Well, he's more than an East or a West Injun himself if he means to play any piratical tricks upon me. Halloo! his helm's down, and jib-sheets flying! Going in stays!"

"Yes, sir," said I. "He's coming for us. If we cast off now, and pull right up to windward, we can pass his bows, though we may not escape a shot, if he's wicked enough to fire at us."

"Won't do it," said Absalom, stubbornly. "I'll stay where I am and see it out. He's got guns enough to blow us sky-high, whether we stay here or try to run away."

The Englishman tacked and came along a little to windward of us, the captain standing on the rail as before, and at his side a man with a musket in his hand. At a wave of the captain's trumpet the maintopsail was thrown in aback, deadening the ship's way.

"Come alongside, or I'll fire at you!"

"Fire away, if you're mean enough!" retorted Mr. Hussey.

He had hardly spoken when the report followed, and the mate, clapping his hand upon his left arm, sang out:—

"I'm hit! The sneaking cowards!"

"They're coming for us!" said I; for two boats were in the act of being lowered from the ship. "Are you hurt much?"

"No," he answered, sullenly; "nothing serious. Give me the boat's spade, and I will cut some of— But, no; it's of no use fighting against such odds."

With a few strokes of the oars the two English boats closed upon us; and, seeing

how hopeless it was to resist, we submitted.

Our captors did not take the whale in tow, but left him, first marking him with one of their waifs, that he might be more easily found.

Absalom Hussey jumped in upon the quarter-deck of the Allahabad as if he had been a boarding officer, come to take possession, instead of a prisoner-of-war.

He hailed Captain Sinclair in a voice of thunder.

"What does all this mean? Would you shoot a man in cold blood, and then steal his whale?"

Captain Sinclair was a short, stout Englishman, with a quick, business-like manner, and a silky, persuasive voice.

"All's fair in love and war," he answered, carelessly. "Brace full at once, Mr. Derby, and board the main tack! Suppose you have heard, Mr.—what may your name be?—that your country and mine are in a state of war. I am on a whaling voyage myself, but I carry letters of marque, giving me full authority to capture the enemy wherever I may find him on the high seas, and to burn, sink, or destroy, as I may see fit. I can't stop to pick up your whale now, for I want your ship first. Pack all sail upon her, Mr. Derby, and have the guns loaded ready for service. You had better go to the surgeon, Mr. American, and have your wound attended to at once. I hope it's not serious."

"No; it isn't serious," returned Absalom. "But no thanks to you for that. You may call yourself a letter-of-marque, or a privateer, or what not, but I say you're no better than a pirate and a murderer."

"Don't chafe, friend," said the English captain. "You'll not be ill-treated, if you just keep your temper, and submit to the fortunes of war. My business now is to get possession of the Belinda. She has hauled her other whale alongside, and will put her helm up directly to turn down for you. Mr. Derby, set the Yankee flag at the peak."

Our giant, though a man of wonderful powers of endurance, found the flesh wound so painful that he went to the doctor and had the ball extracted. But as soon as the arm was bound up he returned to the deck, where, with all the rest of us, he watched the proceedings with the keenest interest.

Our little ship, the Belinda, was coming down before the moderate trade-wind; but, having a whale towing in the fluke-rope alongside, her rate of sailing was slow.

Meanwhile, the Allahabad, with the stars and stripes flying as a decoy, and her guns shotted for action, held her course sharp on a wind, and it was evident that when she tacked she would have the weather-gauge. The English mates and crew were already rubbing their hands in eager anticipation of a prize, and laughing at the idea of a green Yankee running down to put himself right into their hands.

But it was evident that Absalom Hussey did not share in their opinion. "Let them laugh that win," said he. "And it's my belief that these John-Bull pirates will soon laugh out of the other side of their mouths. You may depend on it that Kiah Starbuck has got his eye peeled; and, if I know him, he already smells a rat. He must soon make out that this is an armed ship, even though she *does* carry whale-boats on her cranes. And he must know Absalom Hussey better than to suppose he would neglect his business, and leave a whale afloat on the water, to go yamming on a mere friendly visit to a strange ship. Then, again, the English second mate was stupid enough to put his own waif—a black one—upon the whale, instead of taking one of mine. Kiah knows well enough that I never had a black waif in my boat. The B'indy will soon be near enough to make out all this; and if she once lets go that whale, and makes sail on a wind, she'll soon show a clean pair of heels to this fellow, who is no sailer at all."

Absalom was right in his predictions, for the Belinda was still three miles to the windward of us, when it became evident that Captain Starbuck had woke up, and was keenly alive to the whole situation. The Belinda came suddenly to the wind, on the opposite tack from that of the Englishman, and everything was trimmed sharp for a race; while the rate at which the little ship forged ahead showed that she had shaken off the burden by cutting the whale adrift from alongside.

"Hurrah!" yelled Absalom. "Cheer, boys, Ki Starbuck! Now, Mr. Pirate," said he to Captain Sinclair, "you may as well shorten sail and catch the whales, if you want 'em; for you can't catch the B'indy with any such dull wagon as the Alleyhabad, if that's her name; and *bad* enough, too, she is in point of sailing."

A half-hour's trial satisfied the English captain that the chase was useless, and he gave the order to abandon it and go back

for the whales. Both of them were secured, and the ship hove to for cutting-in; while our dear old *Belinda* was, before sundown, hull down in the eastern horizon.

Meanwhile, Absalom, who could not seem at all to understand the status of a prisoner-of-war, continued to taunt and aggravate Captain Sinclair, not scrupling to address him to his face as pirate and murderer, and threatening all sorts of vengeance if chance should ever offer for him to pay off the old score. Sinclair at last, irritated beyond all endurance, ordered that he should be put in irons and confined below.

"You haven't got men enough to put *me* in irons," said Mr. Hussey, defiantly.

"We'll see about that," returned the other, foaming at the mouth with rage, and calling his mates and half a dozen of the crew. They succeeded, after a hard struggle, in executing his orders. Absalom knocked one after another sprawling, and would really have remained master of the field but for being stunned by the blow of a capstan bar, wielded by Captain Sinclair himself. He was ironed, and carried down into the cabin, cursing all his foes for a pack of cowards, and demanding, with bitter sneers, if *this* was their boasted idea of fair play.

He was kept in the cabin, under the immediate eye of the captain, but was allowed to come up and walk the quarter-deck at will, though always with his irons on. A place was assigned to me in the half-deck, or steerage, where I messed with the petty officers; and, having laid out a line of tactics opposite to that of my superior, the Englishmen and I got on amazingly well together. I was quiet and cheerful, showing a disposition to make the best I could of the circumstance; a course of proceedings which I recommended in vain to Mr. Hussey, who assured me that he would never knuckle to any John Bull, and that he meant to be defiant to the very last. The remaining four men of our crew were quartered among the English seamen in the fore-castle, and our boat had been hoisted up on the starboard-bow, where the ship carried spare davits for such a purpose. We learned that the *Allahabad* carried, as her full complement, forty men all told; but, as she had taken and manned two prizes, the number was reduced to twenty-eight. The prizes had been sent to Guayaquil, where a few pieces of gold would blind the eyes of

the Spanish officials, and make them wink at violations of neutrality, as well as at many other things not strictly regular.

I asked my messmates in the steerage why the captain wished to detain us, as we were only eating up his provision; and why he did not get rid of us by sending us ashore at one of the Galapagos Islands. But I was informed that the ship would probably soon go to the coast, and make a port either at Guayaquil or Callao. That it was expected the *Phebe* frigate, and perhaps other British men-of-war, would be there; and that, as seamen were scarce, and His Majesty's wooden walls *must* be manned, not even American protections, supposing we had them with us, would be allowed to stand in the way. Indeed, Captain Sinclair might expect to get something in the way of head-money for six good men who had no such papers to show; and certainly so rare a physical specimen as Absalom Hussey would fetch double price in that great human market, the British navy.

I did not fail to report all this to Absalom himself, who swore that the British navy should never have his services; and even threw out threats that the pirate "*Alley-hay-bad*" would come to a *bad* end, and would never drop her anchor in Guayaquil, or any other part of the Spanish main, though what hidden meaning there might be in these threats, I could not then for my life imagine.

As the two whales taken or stolen by the Englishmen from the *Belinda* would make about a hundred and twenty barrels of oil, the trying-out occupied some time, and all of us, except our own officer, took some part in the work, lending a hand here and there, for the sake of doing something, for it was very hard work to do absolutely nothing. But Absalom spent a great part of the time walking the quarter-deck in his handcuffs, with a face blacker than a thunder-cloud, and muttering threats of vengeance, which certainly seemed to me an idle waste of breath.

The fires had been going night and day for seventy-two hours, and we were drawing toward the last end of the rich "*fare*," when I had occasion to come on deck in the middle watch of the night; and tempted by the cool breeze, which felt so grateful upon the heat below, I stretched myself out upon the booby-hatch to enjoy it for a while. The officer of the deck, with all the men of

his watch, were forward of the try-works, all plainly visible to me in the glare of the fire; but everything was still elsewhere, there being no man on deck abaft the main-mast except the helmsman, who could not be seen by reason of the intervening house. As I lay there, seeing but not seen, I thought I observed a figure moving in the dark smoke, close up to the try-works, at the lee side, where the black pall was thickest as it rolled away in volumes off our lee-quarter. Presently the figure emerged from the smoke, creeping aft on all fours. As he reached the quarter-deck he straightened up to his full height, and I had no longer any doubt; that gigantic form could be no other than that of Absalom Hussey. With a quick jerk of his arm, he threw something—I knew not what—over the lee-rail; and then, turning his face for the first time, caught sight of me. With a single bound he was at my side, one hand upon my throat, the other covering my mouth.

"Hush!" he whispered. "Don't speak; as you value your life, whatever may happen during the next hour, don't speak; don't dare even to remember you have seen anything."

All this was said under his breath, but with the utmost eagerness and intensity of feeling. I signified by a nod that I heard and understood. His grasp at once relaxed, and he was gone—had vanished into the cabin. I lay for a moment as if stupefied; then the whole thing was clear to my mind, and I knew well enough what he had been doing. I looked out off the weather-bow. There was Chatam Island looming not many miles off, and I said to myself:—

"All right! There's no danger of life or long suffering in open boats. Anything for a change."

But I could not go below again, knowing what I did. It was not many minutes before I could smell smoke, when I put my head down to the scuttle of the booby-hatch; and soon my messmates, who were sleeping down there, awoke and turned out, talking and wondering about it. Then I saw a wreath of smoke starting up the main hatchway, which was standing open; then some of the men leaping, half-choked, up out of the fore-castle. The cry of "Fire! fire!" was raised. The flames burst forth through the deck on both sides of the try-works. Everybody was on deck, and all was confusion and terror.

There was some talking for a minute or two of efforts to put out the fire; but this was quickly abandoned as hopeless, and no thought was given to anything but saving our lives by getting clear of the burning ship. To get the boats down, and collect a small stock of provisions and water, was all that we could do, for tongues of flame were shooting up the hatchways, and the good ship Allahabad was fated.

The helm was put hard up, and she was run off before the wind, which drove the fire forward, and gave us a better chance to work. Absalom rushed up to Captain Sinclair with the handcuffs on.

"Here," said he, "set me free! You wouldn't keep any human being in irons now, would you?"

"No, no; of course not! Take your own boat and crew, and save yourselves. You shall have the same chance as the rest."

The mate turned to me with a knowing look and a wink. While I was fumbling with the key of the handcuffs he gave them a peculiar shake, and they dropped to the deck. Of course I knew well enough that he was not in irons when his grasp was on my throat and mouth.

"Here, my B'lindy's!" he cried. "Where are you all? Clear away our boat, and follow her right down! Don't stop for provisions, or anything else. Let's be the first boat to get clear of the cursed pirate!"

As we were pushing off from her sides there was a crash and a rumbling, and then a solid body of flame shot way up, mast-head high, lighting up the ocean for miles around us. The try-works, with the full pots of boiling oil, had settled down through the deck as the carlines below had burned off, and the whole mass was mingled with the roaring and blazing wreck underneath!

The English boats got clear of the ship as fast as they could, and, like Macbeth's guests, "stood not upon the order of their going." As the man at the helm left the ship to her own guidance, the power of her after-sails, which were not yet ablaze, brought her speedily up to the wind, driving the flames and smoke aft, so that in a moment more the whole ship became a roaring mass of fire below and aloft. After pulling to a safe distance, we lay on our oars, looking at the awfully sublime sight, five boats of us, within easy talking distance of each other.

"Our dear old ship is gone!" said Captain

Sinclair, with a sadness in his tone that well expressed that feeling of affection which every old sailor feels for the vessel that has carried him safely on the ocean. "And there's some strange mystery about it, too. Mr. Derby, how in the name of wonder could this have happened?"

"Don't know, sir," answered the English mate stolidly. "'Twasn't my fault."

"Didn't you let the caboose-pen run dry?"

"No, sir; it was filled with water as soon as I came on deck, at eight bells. I saw it done myself."

"Well, if there was no carelessness in that way, then it must have been incendiary. Somebody was evil-minded enough to burn us out of our home, but I suppose we shall never be any the wiser for it now," added the captain, dismissing the matter in a very unsatisfied way.

"Serve you right for a dirty pirate," muttered Absalom Hussey, not loud enough to be heard by the English boats. "Well, captain," he cried, raising his voice, "I suppose you don't want any more of my services or of my company. I am quite willing to take my chance on my own hook; and as for my sore arm and the two whales you stole from the B'lindy, I hope to be even with you some day. Good-night. Pull ahead, boys." And away we glided towards the distant land, which was still visible in the bright glare from the burning ship.

"Let 'em lie on their oars and look at her all night if they want to," he said; as we stretched to our oars. "I said I hoped to be even with him some day, but I reckon I've pretty well squared accounts already. I guess his 'Alley-hay-bad' is in rather a *bad* fix just now, and she won't do any more piracy on the high seas at any rate."

After pulling a few miles to windward, we perceived a ship running down by the end of the island, and shaped our course so as to head her off. We lost the run of her two or three times in the darkness, for the firelight of the burning ship had gradually died out. When at last we got near enough

to hail, the answer thrilled us with joy, for it was given in the well-known voice of Captain Kiah Starbuck, and the welcome that awaited us on board the *Belinda* was a joyous one indeed. The next morning at daylight we saw the English boats coasting along under the lee of the island, but, as they recognized our ship, they would not come near us, preferring to take their chances of going ashore and waiting to be taken off by one of their own countrymen.

We prosecuted our voyage with good success, and were fortunate enough to bring the *Belinda* home safe, with a full cargo, though we had a narrow escape from the British cruisers, even after we had arrived in sight of our own coast.

Captain Sinclair was no wiser as to the cause of the fire that destroyed his ship until some years later, after the two nations were at peace, when Captain Absalom Hussey, commander of the *Ruby*, met him in a foreign port, and after, as he expressed it, taking satisfaction out of his hide by giving him a sound thrashing, had also the further satisfaction of boasting to him how it had been done.

"You know, boys, that there is a space under every whaler's try-works, between the masonry and the deck, which is always kept filled with water while the fires are burning, and these few inches of water swashing about prevent all danger of the ship taking fire. Absalom, having by his great strength, sprung and bent the shackles of his slender handcuffs, until he was able to work them on and off at will, had taken an auger from the ship's tool-chest, and creeping under the lee of the try-works in the smoke, had bored a hole down through the deck in the 'caboose-pen,' as it is called, thus letting the water all run off. It was this auger that I had seen him toss overboard when he crept aft again; and he knew then—and so did I, after what he whispered to me—that if the trick was not discovered the ship would be in flames within less than half an hour."

ESTRANGED.

BY JEAN INGLESIDE.

AND this is all. The end has come at last,—
The bitter end to all that pleasant dream
That cast a halo o'er the happy past,
Like golden sunshine on a happy stream.

Sweet were the days that marked life's sunny slope
When we together drew, our hearts atune;
But through the vision of a future hope
We did not dream that they would pass so soon.

In happy mood fair castles we upreared,
And thought that life was one long summer day;
We had no dread of future pain, nor feared
That shadow e'er should fall athwart our way.

But sunken rocks lie hid in every stream,
And ships are wrecked when just in sight of land;

So we to-day wake from our pleasant dream
To find our hopes were builded on the sand.

I do not blame you that you do not keep
The troth you plighted ere your heart you knew;
Better the parting now than wake to weep
When time has robbed love's roses of their dew.

Another face will help you to forget
The idle dream that had its birth in trust;
And other lips will kiss away regret
For broken faith and idols turned to dust.

Ah, well! you choose, perhaps, the better way;
A purer love shall in your heart be shrined;
And I? I shall go down my darkened way,
Forever seeking what I shall never find.

THE FORTUNE OF THE FENLEYS.

BY ANASTASIA DEVERAUX.

"HAVE a carriage, sir?" cried out a little, keen-eyed, wide-awake looking fellow, swinging a huge trunk to the back of his carriage, and strapping it down with a few dexterous movements.

A dark, heavily-bearded man, walking down the platform, paused slightly, as he replied:—

"No, I prefer to walk, if you will oblige me with the proper direction. I wish to go to Charles Fenley's."

"Ah—yes. You see the large stone house through the hemlocks yonder? That is the place. The road runs directly by it, though the house sets in a little, and you can only catch a glimpse of the east gable from the highway as you come up. But there is a fine carriage-way opening to the right, closely set with hemlocks; it will lead you to the door."

"Thank you," said the stranger, bringing his eyes from their distant outlook, and turning them for an instant on his informant, who all this time was assisting a lady into his carriage, and handing her various packages. The bold, wily, passionate eyes shrank a little from the keen, questioning glance of the driver; then lifting his hat to

the lady, whom he recognized as a fellow-passenger, he turned, and walked rapidly down the street.

Several more passengers were at length secured by the enterprising Jehu, who rejoiced in the high-sounding name of Whipple Fitzsimmons. Everybody, though, called him Whip, or at the most, Whip Simmons, and half the people did not know there was any more to his name. His name was synonymous with his calling, for nearly ten years—ever since he was a mere strippling—Whip had driven the depot carriage to and from the Westboro' station. He was indeed as much a fixture as the station itself, and his crisp, cheery voice as unfailing as the whistle of the locomotive. The amount of useful knowledge which he managed to pick up was quite wonderful. He was a complete walking encyclopedia, not only knowing everybody, but their past, present and future affairs and prospects.

One after another his passengers were set down, when he suddenly bethought him that he had neglected to inquire the destination of the young lady in drab—his first passenger. He hastened to atone for his neglect. The young lady smiled pleasantly,

and said she was in no haste, and, indeed, rather preferred to wait for the others. When the last one was left, he turned towards her with a quiet, "Well?"

"To Mrs. Charles Fenley's," she answered, promptly.

He gave her a quick glance, and then looked away up the hill, to where the dark figure of a man was just turning into a dense hemlock drive.

"Is he one of the family?" she questioned, answering his look.

"I think not—at least, I never saw him before. You knew Mr. Fenley was dead?"

"Yes, I knew." And drawing her veil over her face, she leaned back with a little sigh of weariness. She was evidently expected, for the carriage had hardly stopped, before a servant came down the steps, and bowing low, said the carriage had been sent to the station in the morning. Miss Everard had been expected in the first train.

An accident on the Western road accounted for the delay, she said, following the servant up the steps. A fair, middle-aged woman, who introduced herself as Mrs. Howard, the housekeeper, met her in the hall, and, preceding her up two flights of stairs, ushered her into a pleasant, prettily-furnished room in one of the east gables.

"This is to be your room," she said, pleasantly. "I hope you will like it. Mrs. Fenley thought the west end was so shut in by trees that it might seem gloomy to you, though we are so accustomed to it, that we do not mind."

Miss Everard went to the window, and looked out. She uttered a little exclamation of delight.

"Do you like it?"

"It is perfect!"

Mrs. Howard smiled contentedly, for it had in reality been her forethought that had assigned this particular room to the homeless girl, who had come to be an assistant and companion to the invalid widow of Charles Fenley. She came in answer to an advertisement, and Mrs. Fenley had never seen her; though Mark her son, upon whose judgment she relied implicitly, had been out to Albany to meet her, and reported so favorably that she desired to send for her at once. Mrs. Fenley was a weak sort of a woman, easily influenced, without any great strength of mind or body, yet with quick, warm impulses, and a tender, susceptible heart. Her husband had been a tower of strength

to her. She trusted him to do her thinking, to decide upon her friends; and leaned so entirely upon his judgment, and his strength, that when the support was withdrawn, she fell prone to the dust. Although Mark in a measure filled his place, he could not be always with her, and her health, never very robust, suffered from continued low spirits and loneliness. To overcome and remedy this state of things, it had been suggested by Dr. Goldthwaite, that they procure a young, cheerful, strong-minded woman, to act as companion and friend. And so May Everard had been selected to fill the rather difficult position.

That Miss Everard had strength, and will, and determination enough you could see at a glance. Looking at her, you never feared but she could make her way in the world. The steady fire in the clear, hazel eyes, the pale, resolute face, with its firm, proud mouth, told her character at once. There was a calm, quiet dignity that *commanded* respect, and so when Mark Fenley met her, he felt like one soliciting a favor, rather than a young millionaire bargaining for the services of a penniless girl.

Miss Everard had hardly arranged her toilet, before a servant came to say Mrs. Fenley was ready to receive her. She bowed, and followed silently. Mark Fenley arose at her entrance, and came forward to meet her, cordially extending his hand. She just touched his feverish palm with her cool, moist fingers, then turned towards a great crimson easy-chair, that had been wheeled into the centre of the room. Mark came round to his mother's side, and taking her thin white hand, and laying it in Miss Everard's, said:—

"Miss Everard, this is my dear mother. Mother, this is Miss May Everard, whose judicious care will, I trust, soon make you well again."

The thin slender fingers clung a moment to the cool, firm palm, then with an uncontrollable impulse she drew the calm, pure face to her bosom, and kissed her softly.

"I am very sure we shall be friends, dear," she said, with tender, tremulous lips.

A sudden wave of emotion swept over the quiet face, absolutely transfiguring it; a tender mistiness brooded in the shadowy eyes, and a faint tint wavered an instant in the pure cheek. But she did not speak, she only caressed the soft fair hair with a sort of mute protecting fondness.

She had been vaguely conscious that the room had still another occupant, and the thought floated carelessly through her brain that it was the stranger she had noticed at the station, but when Mrs. Fenley said:—

"Allow me, my dear Miss Everard, to make you acquainted with my dear brother, Edward Fenley," she took a hasty step forward, a swift fire blazing in her eyes; then as suddenly checking herself, she said:—

"Pardon me. I thought it an old acquaintance. I remember, now, we were fellow-passengers this afternoon," bowing with the coolness and hauteur of a princess.

Mr. Fenley expressed his pleasure at again meeting his traveling-companion, and the introduction being over, the conversation became general.

Neither Mrs. Fenley nor Mark had noticed the strangeness of her manner, but it had by no means escaped the sharp glance of Mr. Edward Fenley.

"Confound the girl, with her impassive ways. It can't be she ever saw—pshaw! I won't be such a fool as to be frightened by a girl," he muttered through his white teeth, that gleamed with an unpleasant glitter through his heavy black moustache.

Almost immediately supper was announced, and the stranger, offering his arm to Mrs. Fenley, left Mark free to follow his inclinations, and escort Miss Everard.

If he had been blind to the little by-play between her and his uncle, he had by no means failed to observe the soft emotion that had made her, for the moment, the most beautiful woman he had ever beheld. He wondered if there was any man that could call that beautiful glow to her face. Somehow the thought wasn't particularly pleasant, and he tried to dismiss it, but, like all unpleasant thoughts, it slipped in unbidden, a skeleton always at the feast.

After they had returned to the parlor, Mrs. Fenley said:—

"Edward, you and Miss Everard have done me a great deal of good already. I feel like another woman."

"If I could have known *my* coming could have in any way helped you, dear Annie, I should have been here before this. But I did not know you were in trouble; indeed, I have been so afflicted myself, dear sister, you will not wonder that for a time I was completely overwhelmed with my own sorrows," he said, leaning over her, and look-

ing down into her eyes that were raised trustingly to his.

"No, Edward, I will not be selfish in my sorrow; I have my child left to me, you have lost all. Miss Everard, I must explain a little, that you may understand the cause of our rejoicing. This gentleman was the youngest brother of my late husband. He has lived in New Orleans fifteen years. I think I never saw you but once, Edward?"

"Only once, Annie."

"It was just before you sailed for New Orleans, and your little girl—your little Mary—was scarcely five years old. She was such a grave, womanly little thing, I remember her perfectly. She was five years younger than Mark. Well, Miss Everard, six months ago we heard that Edward, his wife and child had all fallen victims to the yellow fever. Judge of my joyful surprise, then, when Edward himself came to-day. The report was true of his wife and daughter; but he, after being given up as incurable, finally recovered. Do you wonder at our great joy?"

May Everard sat like one petrified. A look of blank horror made her face positively ghastly. With a terrible fascination, she kept her eyes fastened on this man, leaning familiarly on the arm of Mrs. Fenley's chair. When that lady ceased speaking, she tried to find voice to answer, but it seemed her tongue clove to the roof of her mouth. She could feel the blood rushing like fire through her veins, and yet she was cold as ice! At length, by a powerful effort of her strong will, she forced herself to say:—

"I congratulate you," wondering if they would notice how hard and strained her voice sounded.

"Those southern skies have changed Edward so that I did not know him," Mrs. Fenley continued. "He used to be as fair as Mark," glancing up lovingly at the fair face, so like her own, save for its royal wealth of blonde beard.

With a plea of weariness, Miss Everard begged to be excused, but not till long after every light was extinguished in every quaint gable of the old stone mansion, did May Everard pause from her monotonous tramp, tramp across her little chamber.

"I will wait," she said, at length, "the development of circumstances. I know all now, and can control myself in future. We will see, Mr. Edward Fenley, who will

triumph in the end. Indeed, I feel a sort of fierce desire to measure swords with this modern Apollyon."

Dr. Goldthwaite's prescription worked to a charm, and he laughingly shook his cane at Miss Everard, protesting that it was "shamefully unfair, taking a man's patients right out of his hands."

Under the influence of May's strong will and cheerful spirits, Mrs. Fenley grew better, and more cheerful. As she had leaned on her husband, so she leaned on this girl. She was stronger than Mark—she felt that. She could not feel that sense of rest that a strong nature always imparts to a weak one, when with Mark. He had inherited, too, much of her impotence of will; but then he had also inherited her tender, trusting, impulsive nature. Let Mark Fenley be surrounded by good influences, and he would be a true, tender man. But let the powers of darkness assail him, let the waves of temptation beat against him, and chances would be that he would be hopelessly wrecked. He would not yield without a struggle, however, because the innate love of goodness was strong in him, but he was so easily led.

May Everard saw this before she had been in the house a month; saw it perhaps the sooner, for the very reason that made it painful to her. For with all her calm strength, and firmness, and self-control, she was not proof against the power of love. She struggled very hard against this passion, for there was another reason, still, why she should not love Mark Fenley. But when did love ever listen to reason? One thing, however, she *could* do. She could conceal her real feelings from Mark, and so suffer alone, for she did not doubt that a little discouragement, and a few cool repulses, would effectually kill his very evident passion. But there she misjudged him. Mark Fenley was not weak in his affections, whatever might be said of his principles. It was the one strong point in his nature. If he loved, it was with a clear, strong, unchanging devotion, that no time, or chance, or condition, could ever effect.

Edward Fenley had become a fixture at the house. His sister-in-law insisted upon his staying, and he seemed perfectly content to stay. He, somehow, seemed to take the position of leader in the house, both Mrs. Fenley and Mark deferring to him upon all matters of judgment or business.

Charles Fenley had left a large property,

mostly in bank stock and mining shares. By his advice, the mining shares were gradually disposed of, as, in his opinion, there was about to be a grand collapse in mining operations. As the brother of Charles Fenley, he was received in good society, and trusted, financially, to any amount. His brother's good name was a bulwark of strength, which he did not, from any false modesty, hesitate to avail himself of.

If it had not been for May Everard, Edward Fenley would have had things all his own way. But there she was, and there she was likely to remain for the present. He hoped, by and by, to get rid of her, but for the present, she must be endured. He had an unpleasant feeling of being watched; and though Miss Everard treated him with the most scrupulous politeness, and he behaved with the utmost gallantry towards her, each knew that each was pitted against the other. It was a race for life, too; a trial of power, of will, of diplomacy. In one thing she had the advantage—*she knew him*, but he, though he had racked his brains until he was tired, could not remember where or when he had met her. And yet, sometimes, some fitting expression of her face, some chance poise of the graceful head, or some slight inflection of the musical voice, came back to him like the echo of some old, half-forgotten song, with a wail of pain dying along its chords.

Mark had gone out but little evenings at first, but his uncle, who was "not used to being housed," he said, prevailed on him to go out with him. At first, they came in early, but by degrees the hour grew later, and Miss Everard noticed a certain nervousness in Mark's manner, that awoke her suspicions. There was a troubled, uneasy look in his eyes, a sort of appealing, half-frightened expression, that was absolutely painful to see. When they were alone together; it would almost wholly disappear; but at once, if Mr. Edward Fenley made his appearance, it flitted like a shadow across the fair, characterless face. And yet he clung to him with wonderful tenacity, forsaking his old associates, and even his mother's society; and, more yet, the presence of the woman he loved, to be with this man. There seemed a sort of mute fascination in his presence. He had only to look in those deep, wily, mesmeric eyes, to lose all self-volition, and follow blindly wherever he led.

Mrs. Fenley, too, was partly under the spell. The first Miss Everard noticed was the promptness with which she acted upon his suggestions, and the deference she paid to his lightest wishes or opinions. She had worn a widow's cap when Miss Everard first came, and her abundant fair hair was combed plainly away from her delicate forehead; but one evening, conversation turning upon the subject, he expressed his disapprobation of people's "parading their feelings before folks, by signs and badges, instead of treasuring them in their hearts as something too sacred for exposure."

The next morning Mrs. Fenley came down to breakfast, her soft, wavy hair looped away from her face. She blushed scarlet beneath the surprised, admiring look that flashed into the dark, bewildering eyes bent for an instant on her face. A little later, on passing the door which stood slightly ajar, Miss Everard heard the low, flexible voice of Edward Fenley set to a tenderer key than she had ever heard it before. Instinctively she glanced up, though without pausing; but that hasty glimpse was enough. Mrs. Fenley was standing with her back to the window, a cloud of soft spring sunshine sifting through her pale brown hair; while standing directly before her, and holding her hand in both of his, was Edward Fenley. His back was to the door, but May Everard knew how his dark, passionate eyes were holding the very soul of the woman standing before him, flushing and paling like a girl of sixteen. She went up to her room, feeling faint and giddy. Should she suffer it to go on? Was he to conquer, after all? Was his power over them strong enough to withstand even the revelation she could make? She was hardly ready yet; she was curious to know how far he would go, and was possessed with an intense desire to give him the length of his rope. She resolved, however, to keep a closer watch on his movements than she had yet done; and, full of this determination, she descended to the parlor. Before reaching the door she heard his voice, in low, pleading, passionate tones. She only felt the more determined to thwart him, if possible, when she saw the evident embarrassment of Mrs. Fenley, and the angry glance of defiance he gave her, though his lips were saying, in smooth, polite phrase, his regret at "being obliged to leave just when the attraction became doubly great to stay."

That night he was out of town, and Mark, relieved from the strange fascination of his presence, grew bright and cheerful. The restless, troubled expression left his eyes, and a tender look of content crept into them. Once or twice he bent impulsively over his mother's chair and touched his lips to her forehead. She looked up at him with a fond smile, blended with just the faintest tinge of concern.

"I wish you would stay in more evenings, dear," she said, in a low voice. "I shall have to get Miss Everard to exert *her* authority," she added, smiling.

"You overrate my influence, I fear. It is not near as potent as you think," she replied, a little embarrassed.

"Would you exert it if it were? O May—Miss Everard, if you only would!" he said, with sudden passion, bending over her, and speaking hurriedly.

She looked up into the passionate, appealing face, and something she saw there sent the blood through her veins in a swift, fiery tide. But she controlled herself almost instantly, as she replied, indifferently:—

"Certainly, if at any time my advice would be of use to Mr. Fenley, I hope I shall not be so selfish as to withhold it."

The color died suddenly out of his face, and a weary look settled about the pale, tremulous lips. May Everard saw it, and it gave her more pain than it did him. "I might have been kinder," she said, reproaching herself; but then, she *dare* not be kind. She was not sure enough of herself.

She sat in her room that night, thinking it all over. Once she started up to go down and tell them all, and then sat down again in indecision. While she hesitated she heard Mark come out and ascend to his room in the west gable; and almost immediately she heard the lower doors open and close softly, and then Mrs. Fenley's light footfall on the thickly-padded stairs as she came up one flight, and turned the key to the south chamber, which she had occupied since her husband's death. There was a large, airy bedroom opening out of the east sitting-room, which communicated also with the library. During her husband's lifetime it had been their sleeping-room, but since it had been kept for a guest-chamber, and since her husband's brother came had been assigned to him.

It was one of those warm, foggy nights that sometimes come in May, bringing out

the fresh scent of the ferns, and the sweet, moist breath of the woodlands. May Everard raised her window and leaned out. A light, spectral belt of fog floated over the village, that lay dark and still in the valley below. Through the mist a waning moon looked out with pallid, haggard face; the hemlocks gloomed in long, dusky curves, while the faint fragrance of the hyacinths came up from the garden below. She leaned her head on the sill, and listened to the monotonous treble of the frogs in a neighboring pool. Suddenly a slight sound smote upon her ear. She raised her head and listened intently, straining her eyes to catch the faint outline of an approaching form, scarcely perceptible through the fog. A tremor of apprehension ran over her as the slow, stealthy steps came softly under her window.

It was doubtless burglars, for she saw a careful and noiseless hand fasten back the library blinds. She rose to call Mark, when a long-drawn, stifled breath from the intruder caught her ear, revealing his identity at once. It was as familiar to her as his voice would have been, though he was utterly unconscious of the habit he had acquired, but which she had noticed often. She sat down. It would be useless to call Mark now; she could not impart her suspicions to him without revealing her secret, and she was not quite ready yet to do that. Throwing a dark shawl over her dress, and slipping off her boots, she crept out of her room and down the two long flights of stairs. A door opened into the library from the hall, but she knew that it was kept locked on the inside. There was no other way but to gain the east sitting-room before he got in. The shutters were closed, for the room was little used of late, and she could not see her hand before her; she had to be cautious, lest some slight noise might give warning of her presence.

The upper half of the door between the sitting-room and library was of glass, screened by a green baize curtain. Cautiously she groped her way to this door and listened. He had raised the sash, and presently she heard him step in. It puzzled her to know how he opened the window, for Mrs. Fenley was morbidly afraid of robbers, and kept strict watch that no door or window was permitted to go unfastened. Besides, she knew the best and strongest of springs secured the library windows, as all

valuable papers, money, etc., were kept there. All was perfectly still for the space of five minutes; then she heard the long-drawn, stifled breath again, and almost immediately a dim, shaded light was placed on the little black walnut escritoire, where the papers were kept. She saw him take a key from his pocket and unlock it, and commence searching among the many packages of papers, rejecting them one after another, with a sort of feverish impatience. It seemed to her then, and for a long time after, like some hideous nightmare. Standing in the oppressive silence and gloom of the great, lonesome house, enveloped in darkness that was almost tangible, holding her shawl across her bosom with a nervous clutch, as, standing tip-toe, she peered through a little rent in the coarse baize curtain at the dark figure turning over pile after pile of papers, as silent and noiseless as if it were a phantom!

It was positively a relief when a muttered oath reached her ear. It broke the terrible spell of unrealness, that was fast becoming unbearable.

"Not here, after all! Curses on the luck!" he growled, suddenly extinguishing the light.

In a moment she heard him groping at the door where she stood; she took a step back, crouching behind it. She had barely time to throw her shawl over her face, when the door swung open, and he stepped into the room. His coat brushed against her; she held her breath, for it seemed as if he must hear the beating of her heart. Fortunately, however, he soon found the door opening into the hall, and directly the faint click of a lock told her that he had gone out at the front door. Swiftly and noiselessly she sped back to her room, but only in season to see him disappearing in the dense mist that had now shut down closer than ever. She was too excited to sleep, and not until the faint saffron glow burned through the gray mist in the east did she even lie down.

Evidently Mr. Edward Fenley did not find what he came for; and as the large sum of money received from the sale of the mining shares had been placed there, awaiting an investment, it did not take her long to decide what his object was, or the reason of his absenting himself *that* night, as the next day an old mercantile friend of the late Mr. Fenley was to have the loan of it.

It was late when she descended to the

breakfast-room that morning, and looking in her mirror, she saw that she was wretchedly pale; but she was conscious of growing a shade paler, and starting nervously, as the first sight that confronted her upon opening the door was Mr. Edward Fenley, sitting by the window and very composedly reading his paper.

"Miss Everard looks at me as if I were a ghost. Am I to flatter myself that it is such a joyful surprise to her?" he asked, bowing with mock deference.

"Mr. Fenley can assign it to what cause he pleases," she said, with superb indifference.

"What is the matter, dear? You look ill," Mrs. Fenley said, solicitously.

"It is nothing. I believe I did not sleep well," she replied, carelessly, with a quick glance from under her lids at Fenley.

He caught the look, and returned it with one as keen.

The breakfast passed off unusually dull. Mark was pale and silent, and there were dark lines under his eyes.

"I think we are all a little stupid this morning," said Mrs. Fenley, with a little laugh. "I dreamed all night of burglars. You see, Mark, I was a little foolish last night, and after you went to bed I went to the *escritoire* and took out that money and carried it to my room. I suppose that accounted for my unpleasant dreams."

A swarthy red burned an instant in Edward Fenley's cheek.

"Can you interpret dreams, Mr. Fenley?" said Miss Everard, looking at him with her cool, calm eyes.

"No; but I am gifted with second-sight—I can read fortunes," he replied, looking at her with a dangerous glitter in his eyes.

"Ah! that is an accomplishment. Can you seers cast your *own* horoscopes?" she asked, indifferently.

"That is our secret."

"Indeed; then you own to having secrets. Do you know that I have a natural aptitude for divining secrets?" she said, in a careless, bantering tone that might not mean anything, or might mean a great deal.

He looked up, and for a moment they looked into each other's eyes; his fierce, bold, defiant; hers clear, calm, persistent.

"I wouldn't advise you to attempt to divine mine," he said, doggedly, lowering his glance.

A little later he brushed against her in

the hall. She looked up. He turned suddenly and grasped both her hands with a grip like iron.

"Is it friends or enemies?" he hissed, a pale yellow fire glowing in his eyes.

"I am accustomed to *choosing* my friends," she said, loftily.

"It is enemies, then?"

"As you please," indifferently.

He threw her hands from him fiercely, and strode out of the door.

For a week following he was out every evening, and always accompanied by Mark. Mrs. Fenley did not say anything, but May saw that it troubled her. She tried hard to persuade herself that it was wholly on his mother's account that she sat at her little window and watched with heavy eyes for his coming. She tried to think it was only sympathy for his mother's sorrow that gave her so sharp a pang when his flushed face and unsteady step revealed his weakness to their unwilling eyes. At last Mrs. Fenley said, leaning her head on May's shoulder, and breaking into passionate weeping:—

"I do wish you would try to save Mark! It is killing me, and I am utterly helpless! Oh, my brave, loving boy! And I was so proud of him, Miss Everard! He never drank so much as a glass of wine; and I exulted when I saw *other* mothers, and knew *their* sons were going to ruin, that *my* son was pure, and true, and upright. O Miss Everard! you are so calm and strong—will you not make an effort to save him?" And sinking on her knees, she lifted her streaming eyes to the face bending over her, scarcely less agitated than her own.

"Have you said anything to him—about—about this weakness?" she faltered.

"Yes; I spoke to him once. He said he believed he was under some dreadful spell. He felt like one chained to some terrible instrument of torture, and though he struggled and struggled, he could not writhe himself from its grasp. And that is not the worst, Miss Everard," she said, lowering her tone, and speaking with evident reluctance; "there have been some five or six thousand dollars withdrawn from the bank within a few weeks. To be sure, it is his own—or will be," she said, a little proudly; "but what pains me most about it is that he professes entire ignorance concerning it. I saw, however, the cashier myself, and he says the orders were written and signed in his own hand. I have spoken to Edward

about the habit which he has acquired, and he says he has talked and pleaded with him as if he were his own child; but the habit seems confirmed. He thinks it must have been growing on him a long while. And I thought him so good and pure! Oh, my boy! my boy! God in Heaven, help me!" she moaned, clasping her weak, nerveless hands.

Ah! how swiftly we importune Heaven in our adversity! Our blessings are ours by right; no uplifted eye records *them*. But at the first stroke of suffering or misfortune, we lift our supplicating hands to Heaven in sudden piety,

"And lips say, 'God be pitiful!'
Who ne'er said, 'God be praised!'"

Miss Everard's calm face was strangely agitated, and her voice trembled, despite her evident effort to control it, as she asked:—

"How can I help him, Mrs. Fenley?"

"You a woman, and ask that! May Everard, you *know* he loves you—you know that you can save him, if you will. You know"——

"Enough!" she interrupted. "I *will* save him; it is my duty and my right—though in a different way from what you think. Trust in me fully, whatever I may say or do that you do not understand. If you could stop the payment of any more orders at the banks," she said, hesitatingly.

Mrs. Fenley evidently shrank, but after a moment assented.

"And now you must excuse me, for I have to go out immediately." And with a firm pressure of the hand, and a hopeful smile, that infused strength into the weak, dependent woman, Miss Everard left, to carry into effect the plan she had resolved upon.

That night a lawyer in New Orleans received the following telegram:—

"Mr. Radcliffe: Come without delay. Bring the necessary papers and documents. I have told nothing yet, but shall be forced to very soon. You will understand—E. G—y is here! He does not suspect. At last he is outwitted. *Come, come.* M. E. F."

When Whip Simmons returned to the station, after distributing the last of his passengers, he found Miss Everard awaiting him. It was something unusual for her to take a carriage, and at the first glance at the strange pallor of her face he concluded she

was ill. But the firm, elastic step and steady tone at once dispelled that idea.

"Drive slowly," she said; "I have something I wish to say to you."

The conversation was long and earnest, and carried on in low, careful tones. She alighted at the foot of the drive and walked to the house. Before parting she said: "I leave it to your judgment; only be sure you go effectually disguised, and on no account lose sight of him for a single night. When it is safe for you to communicate with me I will suspend my scarf from my window. You can see it from the highway. When he comes—you will know him at once by my description—take him at once to your house, and communicate with me without delay."

She found the family waiting tea for her—Mrs. Fenley uneasy and nervous, Mark with a restless, troubled look in his eyes, a blended passion and despair that touched her heart. She put her hand in his for a moment, smiling brightly. He caught it passionately to his lips, then with a fierce pressure that made her cry out with pain, as suddenly released it.

"I was alarmed about you, dear," interrupted Mrs. Fenley, very opportunely. "I was sure something had happened to you."

"Pray never alarm yourself on my account. I am given to long strolls—longer than I am aware, sometimes. This sweet May air is very seductive;" and with a bright, cheerful smile she took her place at the table. She could be very brilliant and entertaining when she chose, and to-night she did choose, and the dull little party soon grew bright, and even gay, under the inspiration of her abundant spirits. She unbent from the usual air of coolness and reserve that she maintained toward Mark; and even the quiet hostility between her and Edward Fenley seemed well-nigh forgotten. Mark was completely fascinated. He had never seen her in this mood before, and he gave himself up to the intoxicating charm of her voice and presence, reckless of the consequences. For one little hour he would revel in elysium, though he were shut out forever after.

When May Everard went to her room she caught a glimpse of her face in the mirror above the dressing-table. She started back with surprise. Could the brilliant, glowing face, with its soft, luminous eyes, grown suddenly tender and tremulous, be the calm, impassive, self-controlled one that had been

reflected there so often? She threw open her window and leaned out to cool the fever in her veins. Mark's step, light and elastic, came up the stairs and passed to his room. A little snatch of song floated back to her—a tender, simple ballad that she had sung once at his request. There was nothing in it to send the blood surging so tumultuously through her veins; nothing to account for the intoxicating thrill of passionate ecstasy that swept over her, leaving her faint and trembling.

During the next ten days Mrs. Fenley lived in a state of continual perplexity. She could not understand either Mark or Miss Everard, and in her perplexity relied more than ever on "Brother Edward." And he, after a few days, grew suddenly devoted and attentive.

Miss Everard beheld this new phase of affairs with dismay. There was no mistaking its meaning; baffled in regard to the son, he was now turning his attention to the mother. Would he triumph, after all, and get control of the Fenley fortune in spite of her? The property had all been left by will to Mrs. Fenley during her life-time. Although little regard had been paid, hitherto, to either its letter or spirit, Mrs. Fenley regarding their interests materially as one; but if this thing *should* take place, could he not, as her husband, control her fortune in part, at least? Morally Mark was now comparatively safe, but financially he was in imminent peril.

Never before were days so long, never so tardy the summer hours. After all these weeks of patient waiting must she be foiled at last? Must a premature disclosure ruin all by giving him a chance to escape? She grew thin and nervous under this constant anxiety. She was in doubt about Mark, too. How she retain the same feeling toward her when he knew just who she was? and did she desire he should? She hardly knew herself. A vague sense of regret, nearly allied to pain, accompanied the thought. All her life she had said that only a strong, unreserving nature could ever mate or tone with hers. It was a woman's prerogative to be weak, clinging, dependent; but of a man strength and firmness were expected. This was the traditional ideal of manhood—was it only a theory? She remembered some women she had known, physically the frailest and weakest, who in purity of morals and strength of principle shamed the

best of men. It was a perplexing subject, and all her reasoning ended with the knowledge that, strong or weak, faultless or erring, she loved Mark Fenley with the one pure, unselfish devotion of her life.

Perhaps Edward Fenley divined something of this; at any rate, he redoubled his attentions to "Sister Annie," as he now continually addressed her. And she grew shy and timid as a girl, flushing and trembling beneath his touch or tone. To his annoyance Miss Everard obtruded herself continually; but one day she was absent. A message had been brought her by a strange lad, and she had almost immediately followed him. Now was his opportunity, and he resolved to improve it. It was his last resort. The property without the woman was preferable, but the property with her was better than not to have it at all; and having plotted and manœuvred three months, he had no idea of relinquishing it now.

It has been said there never was a woman so old, or wise, or shrewd, but she was vain enough to believe she was loved for herself alone, when, to everybody else, the real motive was plainly apparent. Be this as it may, there certainly was no doubt in the heart of the little, fair-haired woman, who listened in a sort of girlish flutter to the passionate love-words of the dark, handsome man bending over her chair, his beard brushing her face, and his dangerous, mesmerizing eyes holding hers with a strength she was powerless to resist. I doubt if she wished to resist, however. The draught of love is very sweet to a woman's lips, else she had not so often drained its bitter dregs. And this was something so new—something she had never thought of as coming into her life again. It had been long years since she had reveled in the delicious intoxication.

"And, Annie, dear," he said, as she yielded herself to his arms, "as your husband and Mark's father, I can exercise an influence over him that I cannot now."

The door suddenly opened, and Mark, accompanied by Miss Everard, entered.

"I am sorry to have interrupted you at such an inopportune moment," said Miss Everard, apologetically, "but there is a gentleman in the library who wishes to see you on important business."

He gave her a quick, keen glance, but the cool, indifferent face did credit to its schooling. It was impassive as marble.

He went out to the library, accompanied

by Mark. Miss Everard gave her arm to Mrs. Fenley.

"Compose yourself," she said, "and be prepared for a strange revelation. I have done the work you asked of me; come and see how well." And half leading, half carrying the trembling, affrighted woman, she gained the library door just as it swung slowly on its hinges, after admitting Fenley and Mark.

There were three gentlemen present; one Mrs. Fenley immediately recognized as Whipple Fitzsimmons; the others were strangers. One, a tall, spare man, with dark iron-gray hair bristling away from a high, bold forehead, came immediately forward, and extending his hand, said:—

"Happy to meet you again, Mr. Grantley. I hardly ever expected to be so fortunate."

"Curses on you! you have hunted me down at last!" cried the *soi-disant* Fenley, his eyes flaming, and the white heat of passion paling his face, as he made a desperate spring for the door.

"Don't be in a hurry, my friend," said the other stranger, laying his hand quietly on his arm, and revealing by the motion his official badge.

He sank doggedly to a seat.

Mark and his mother gazed in blank astonishment. Miss Everard was very pale, her eyes glowing with a strange, dusky fire.

"My friends," said the tall stranger, "I perceive you are not acquainted with the names of your guests. Permit me to at first introduce myself—James Radcliffe, of New Orleans, attorney to the late Edward Fenley; and this," turning to Miss Everard, who had arisen and come to his side, and taking her hand protectingly, "as Miss May Everard Fenley, his only and idolized daughter."

"And he?" said Mrs. Fenley, gasping for breath, and pointing with trembling finger to the cowering form, with its pallid face, and great, wild eyes, looking like a wild beast at bay.

"That, my dear madam, is Edward Grantly, alias Grierson, alias Fenley. He is an old acquaintance of mine. I have had the pleasure of committing him to prison three times, and he has as many times managed to escape. Fortunately, owing to the coolness and *finesse* of Miss Fenley here, the burglar, forger and gamester is once more secured."

"Forgive me, Aunt Annie," said May;

"I had to deceive you in order to secure him. It has been a hard trial to me, but I had determined to wait till the proof was so strong against him that he could not escape. You remember when papa lost five thousand dollars by means of a forged note? It was his work. Later our house was broken into, and money and valuables to the extent of five thousand more were taken. That also was his work. Do you blame me, my dear aunt?"

Before she could reply Mark sprang to her side.

"My brave, heroic little cousin! you have not only nobly avenged yourself, but you have saved us; and not our fortunes only, but something more—our honor," a slight tremor thrilling through his voice.

He folded her a moment in his arms, and gazed down into her eyes. A sudden wave of emotion—such as he had seen once before—swept over her face, the same dewy mistiness brooded in the sweet, shadowy eyes, but a deeper tinge of color burned in her cheek. His heart gave one quick, exultant throb. "My darling!" he whispered, bending impulsively, and kissing the sweet lips. She did not repulse him. *He* was the stronger now, and she was content to have it so. Doubtless Mr. Radcliffe and Whip Simmons thought it a mere cousinly greeting, but Edward Grantly glowered at them from his corner, his lips moving with a half-muttered malediction.

After embracing her aunt, who sat sobbing hysterically, May—as she had always been called, though christened Mary—requested Mr. Radcliffe to tell the remainder of the story.

"It appears," he resumed, "that I am to be spokesman. Very well; talking is my business. To commence at the beginning, then: About ten months ago Edward Fenley and his wife both fell victims to the yellow fever; Miss May also had it, and was carried to the hospital. The story spread that she had also died, and it was quite generally believed in the city. After her recovery, dreading to return to the old home, now so desolate, she tarried in the hospital, ministering to the sick as she had opportunity. I went out to see her, and carried her father's will. The late Edward Fenley was a very eccentric man, and one of the requirements of his will was that if he and his wife were both to die, she should come to her relatives North in the character of a

poor dependent. Only in that way, he argued, would she be able to test their sincerity.

"But Edward Fenley did not die a poor man—not by any means! Accordingly, she came on. While in New York she chanced to see Mrs. Fenley's advertisement for a companion. The idea struck her to come under her second name of Everard, not intending, however, to keep up the deception more than a few days, in which she might have time to gauge her new relatives. She came to Albany, met her cousin Mark, and eventually came to you in the capacity of friend and companion. Judge, then, her surprise, her horror, to see here, in her uncle's house, Edward Grantly, the man who by forgery and burglary had tried to ruin her father, passing himself off as Edward Fenley himself! She then determined to thwart and outwit him. If she made known her real name then, it would ruin all, by giving him a chance to escape. It was very hard keeping her secret, when she found that by his mysterious power he was tampering with the morals of her cousin; but after watching him steal in at midnight, and with false keys open the safe where he supposed a large sum of money was stored, and after having good reason to suspect that he was up to his old game of forgery, she decided to wait no longer, and telegraphed to me to come to her assistance, which I have done as promptly as steam would allow, bringing with me all the necessary papers to prove the truth of my statements. After she had telegraphed to me, she took this gentleman, Mr. Fitzsimmons, into her confidence; and by employing him as a sort of detective, ascertained that by this peculiar magnetic power which he, Grantly, possesses to a remarkable extent, he had persuaded her cousin, Mr. Mark Fenley, to engage in various forms of gambling—faro, billiards, cards, etc. In the meantime he plied him with drugged liquors, and in this way managed to pick his pocket of some two

thousand dollars. But this was not enough. He somehow obtained an old order of his, and copied it so cleverly as to escape suspicion from the cashier to whom it was presented. In this way he obtained some four or five thousand more. At this time Mark received a slight hint, enough to put him on guard; and the payment of checks being stopped by Mrs. Fenley, he then turned his attention in another direction, of which I will not speak, however, only to say that I am happy I arrived in season to put an end to his financiering. And now, if the ladies will retire, I think we will manage to relieve ourselves of his presence."

And bowing low, he held open the door for Mrs. Fenley and May to pass out. Mark saw the deadly paleness of his mother, and sprang to her assistance just in time to receive her fainting form in his arms. The shock had been too much for her delicate system, and then perhaps she loved the man. I think she did. Poor little woman! her love died a violent death, if, indeed, it ever quite died. I think, despite all its unpleasant memories, that she treasured it as something sweet and sacred, forgetting the unworthiness of the lover for love's sake.

Edward Grantly was once more incarcerated in prison, where he had already a nineteen years' sentence, in the aggregate, hanging over him, to which were added ten more.

Mrs. Fenley clung still more to May after she found out their relationship, which she never tired of rejoicing over. Mark, though, unreasonable fellow, was not quite satisfied with a cousinship, and after numerous private consultations, finally won May over to his way of thinking—if, indeed, she had not (secretly) been of that opinion all the time!

And so one fine day the two branches of the house of Fenley united their fortunes, financially and matrimonially, to the unbounded delight and satisfaction of all parties.

RAIN IN SUMMER.

IT comes! The gushing wealth descends!
 Hark! how it patters on the leaves!
 Hark! how it drips from cottage eaves!
 The pasture and the clouds are friends,—
 Drop gently, gentle rain!
 The fainting corn-stalk lifts its head,

The grass grows greener at thy tread,
 The woods are musical again;
 And from the hill-side springing,
 Down comes the torrent singing,
 With grateful nature in accord,
 A full-voiced anthem to the Lord,
 To thank Him for the rain.

A PRISONER OF THE BASTILE.

BY O. A. BIERSTADT.

IT was in the year of grace, 1626, that the Count Louis-Charles-Pierre-Victor de Beaugrand said good-by to his aged parents, and their picturesquely-ruinous old chateau in Normandy, and betook himself to Paris. His purpose was, possibly, to better the decaying fortunes of his ancient family by all honorable means, and, in any case, to see something of court and the world; for then, as now, every born Frenchman looked upon Paris as an epitome of the whole civilized world.

In person the young count was tall and handsome, and the striking costume of his time was well calculated to set off his natural good looks, and make him doubly attractive to the ladies. When he was first presented at court, and graciously allowed to kiss the royal hand of Louis XIII., he carried in his own hand his broad-brimmed felt hat with its ample plume; a cherry-colored mantle was draped gracefully over his left arm; his blue doublet fitted closely, and was gorgeous with gold embroidery; his scarlet small-clothes were knotted with many yellow ribbons; his chamois boots bore huge spurs, and were turned over at the top to be trimmed with fine white lace, which was matched by his wide collar and cuffs; and with a long rapier at his side, a mustache turned up saucily at the ends, and wavy black hair almost down to his shoulders, it was no wonder that the new courtier created some commotion in the susceptible hearts of the queen's maids of honor, who chanced to be present upon the occasion.

One of these noble young ladies, Mademoiselle Marie de Fleuron, was so very much fascinated by the manly appearance of the Count de Beaugrand that she could not turn her bright eyes away from him. She stared and stared, until a companion nudged her gently, and warned her that the king was watching her, and would doubtless soon show her marks of his jealous displeasure.

Louis XIII. was a queer sort of man. Like a good many other kings of France, he was none too fond of his wife and queen; but, unlike most of the others, he refused to make very desperate love to other women. To console himself for the absence of conjugal affection, he was wont now and then to

carry on a mild, little, intellectual flirtation with any one of the queen's maids that most pleased his fancy. But he never advanced a hair's breadth beyond the strictest limits of Platonic love; and he would as soon have thought of laying hold of red-hot iron as of venturing to touch the white hand of his beloved. Such a cold and passionless attachment could not but be acceptable to the greatest prude of his court; so Marie de Fleuron saw no cause for alarm when the king singled her out to become the object of his attentions, and to listen to his dull conversation for hours. But there was one drawback connected with this royal favor, which might prove very troublesome under certain circumstances. The king was more jealous than Othello. Though his own flame burned only with the ardor of ice, the temporary idol of his heart had to be content with this cool homage. She must not look at any other masculine being; she must not dream of any other love; and woe be to the luckless cavalier who should presume to pay the slightest attention to the fair lady set apart and reserved exclusively for his sovereign's delectation.

The Count de Beaugrand knew little about the court, and the maze of its love intrigues. When he appeared within its charmed circle for the second time, the novelty of the situation having somewhat worn off, he felt decidedly more at ease, and could conceive of no earthly reason to prevent his seeking an introduction to that beautiful little blonde, blue-eyed and golden-haired maid of honor, whose glances he had caught and returned with double interest.

"Monsieur the Count, I suppose, has not been long in Paris?" asked Mademoiselle Marie de Fleuron, immediately after the ceremony of presentation was over.

"But a very few days," answered the young nobleman; "and I count them all as lost, because not before to-day did I have the honor of knowing the most beautiful woman that this great city, or the whole world, can show, mademoiselle."

"Monsieur the Count is pleased to jest. I do not understand his pleasantry," remarked the young lady, with gentle dignity.

"Indeed, mademoiselle, I never was more

serious in all my life," rejoined the Count de Beaugrand. "Until this very hour I have always considered love at first sight as the wildest delusion and folly; but one glance into your sweet eyes has changed my mind completely. Henceforth, whether you will or no, I am your slave."

"It must be confessed that you gentlemen from the country lose no time in laying siege to our hearts," said Mademoiselle de Fleuron. "You do not stop for trifles, but pretend to carry the place by storm at once. But perhaps you'll find that a maid of honor to the Queen of France is not so easy a conquest as one of your milk-maids of Normandy," and a dash of disdain gleamed from the lady's eyes.

"You have reason to remind me that I am but a country bumpkin," responded the count, in the humblest of tones. "Pardon my presumption, mademoiselle; my emotion quite carried me away. It is, indeed, madness for me to dream of ever aspiring to this fair hand"; and he ventured to touch the tips of her fingers, while a look of tender sadness crept over his face.

"Now you are too humble," said the lady; and then she hurriedly exclaimed: "Let go of my hand, *s'il vous plait*; His Majesty is looking at us!"

The two young people had been so absorbed in one another that they had not noticed the king's entrance, though all the other ladies had risen from their stools in respectful salutation, as was the etiquette of the court.

Marie de Fleuron hastily snatched away her hand, and sprang to her feet, while her cheeks flushed as red as the reddest of roses. Louis XIII. strode across the room, and without deigning to take note of the Count de Beaugrand's low reverence, he almost hissed in the young lady's ear:—

"Mademoiselle de Fleuron, I see, is engaged. I congratulate her upon her company, and regret that I must forego the pleasure of my customary conversation with her"; and then, before a word could be uttered in reply, the angry monarch disappeared more rapidly than he had come.

The Count de Beaugrand, in one brief moment, had compromised his favor at court more than he could have imagined possible. Henceforth, the king looked on either side or squarely at him without ever seeming to see him. The anxious courtier's deepest bows were quite unrecognized, and

he never again had a chance to touch the royal hand. Other courtiers, skillful in interpreting their master's likes and dislikes, were careful to avoid the new-comer in his disgrace, and he would soon have felt quite deserted, if Marie de Fleuron had not been kinder in proportion as others fell away from him. What true woman would not be drawn to the man who was ruining his worldly prospects for her sake?

Soon the fair maid of honor was almost as much in love as the handsome count, and like people in their sighingly happy condition, they were rather imprudent about showing their feelings. Many times did the jealous king pounce in upon them as they were whispering cosily together, and his face assumed a very black look which would have made more experienced courtiers tremble. He was evidently making up his mind to some severe exercise of his royal authority; and it was now a rare event for him to speak to his former beloved.

As the two lovers were reading the future in each other's eyes late one afternoon, Louis XIII. surprised them, as usual; but this time, instead of glowering silently upon them, he stepped up to the lady and said: "You do well, Mademoiselle de Fleuron, to improve the present moment. If rumor is right, your friend is going on a long journey, and you will not soon see him again."

What was the meaning of this singular speech from the monarch's lips? the lovers asked one another, and could give no satisfactory answer. Marie de Fleuron was troubled with all sorts of gloomy forebodings, and was very reluctant to part from her admirer. But he was confident in his strength and hopes, and laughingly declared that the king had only thought of sending him on a long journey as an ambassador, when, of course, Marie could accompany him as his wife. The Count de Beaugrand, however, found it so agreeable to calm his fair lady's fears by remaining longer in her presence, that it was quite dusk before they could prevail upon themselves to separate. Then he marched slowly out of that grand old historical palace, the Louvre, and threaded his way homewards through the dimly-lighted streets.

The young nobleman was so full of happy thoughts that he paid little or no attention to a large and lumbering vehicle, standing motionless at a corner, while on the box its gray-liveried driver seemed to be taking a

nap, though his four spirited horses should have been reason enough to keep him wide awake. As the musing lover was about to pass through the narrow space between this carriage and the nearest house, a thick mantle was suddenly thrown over his head from behind, and before he could draw his sword or make any outcry, several pairs of stout hands grasped him firmly, and raised and pushed him into the waiting coach. Once in there, and held down by two strong men, the mantle was removed, and the half-suffocated count saw himself in the custody of the king's musketeers.

"By what authority—am I—thus—outrageously—treated?" gasped out the captive to the lieutenant commanding the guards.

"Monsieur the Count de Beugrand," responded the officer, "it is my unpleasant duty to inform you that I am the bearer of a *lettre de cachet*, signed by the king's own hand, and directing me to make you a prisoner."

"And—you mean—to take me—to the Bastile?" asked the unfortunate count.

The lieutenant did not see fit to answer, but whistled shrilly at the carriage window, which signal brought immediately a troop of mounted musketeers clattering from around the corner. With half a dozen men and the officer inside the carriage, and with a cavalry escort before and behind, the young nobleman realized that escape was impossible. As they started off he made the best use of his eyes, and soon he recognized the Rue Saint-Antoine. Going almost to the end of that street, the carriage turned in at a gate, and stopped in a sort of court. The lieutenant helped the prisoner out, led him across a drawbridge, and rapped at the door of the governor's house. That official and a lantern-bearer speedily appeared, and headed the procession. After a few steps all had to stand still, while a second and more massive drawbridge was lowered. Then two or three huge doors were unlocked and unbolted with an ominous rattle, and the Count de Beugrand was a prisoner of the Bastile. The governor hastened to sign a receipt for his latest accession, and after dismissing the lieutenant and the musketeers, he turned to the prisoner, and said:—

"Now, Monsieur the Count, I am ready to show you your quarters. But you must not expect to lie on a bed of roses to-night.

Indeed, I fear you will pass but an indifferent kind of a night. You will be good enough to remember, however, that in my treatment of you I am simply obeying orders. This way, if you please."

The man with the lantern went ahead to light the way, and the governor with the prisoner followed after, the steps of all three resounding with an echo of emptiness in the spacious court they had to traverse. They entered the door of one of the Bastile's famous eight towers, and then slowly picked their way down a dark and slippery flight of steps.

"What does this mean?" exclaimed the prisoner. "Am I to be lodged below ground? Are you leading me to my tomb?"

"Your life is safe, Monsieur the Count," answered the governor, "but my instructions are to put you *au cachot*."

"In the dungeon!" cried the nobleman; and all the horrible tales he had ever heard of captives dying forgotten, under the most cruel tortures, came trooping back to his memory, and glued his tongue to the roof of his mouth.

A heavy stone door was opened; the count was urged into a cell as dark as night, and with a sinking heart he heard bolts and lock grating harshly behind him, and the footsteps of his jailors dying away in the distance. He felt around in the dark, and found that his dungeon was spacious enough, but buried some twenty feet below the level of the ground; it was frightfully damp, and water dropped with a monotonously regular plash in several places. The captive was terrified by the thought that perhaps he was to die by drowning, and he fancied he could see a hole in the dark ceiling above, through which the death-dealing stream was later to be turned on. The floor of the place was a slimy puddle, but a stone platform was raised several inches, and covered with damp straw, to serve for a couch. Upon this wretched bed the unhappy prisoner stretched himself, and began to meditate on his situation. Occasionally his reveries were disturbed by evidences of animal life; spiders walked leisurely across his hands; toads plumped from the slime right into his face; and rats ran rapidly over his shivering body. It may well be supposed that the Count de Beugrand spent a horrible night, without a wink of sleep.

After interminable hours he imagined it must be day, because he could distinguish

rumbling noises above him; but not a ray of light filtered through into his dark dungeon. Neither was any food brought him, and bitter experience now first taught him what it is to suffer from hunger and thirst.

At last his door was thrown open, and a couple of turnkeys beckoned him to follow them. He was conducted into a vaulted chamber, where sat a magistrate and his secretary, and was told to prepare for a very searching examination. By its beginning he learned that the accusation against him was of treasonably conspiring with Mademoiselle de Fleuron, and others unknown, against the welfare of the state and king. When asked to tell all about his relations with the lady, he thought himself in honor bound to be silent upon the subject of his love, and refused to answer a single question.

"If you persist in this silence, Monsieur the Count," said the magistrate, "I shall be obliged to have recourse to strong measures to vindicate the majesty of the law. For the last time I ask, will you answer me or not?"

"I must respectfully decline to answer," said the count, coolly.

"Summon the questioner and his aid," was the order given to the messenger at the door.

Two stalwart and sullen-featured men made their appearance, and bowed silently in response to the magistrate's stern command to "Give the prisoner the ordinary question of the *brodequin*!"

From a dark corner were brought a low bench, a straw mattress, and that peculiar instrument of torture known as the "boot." The Count de Beaugrand was bound fast to the bench, and his hands were tied behind him. Then his bared limbs were put in the boot. Two stout oaken planks were set up between his legs, and another was placed on the outside of each leg, all being kept perfectly rigid by ropes wound round and round. While the aid stood grasping the victim's shoulders, the torturer in chief stooped down, and with a heavy wallet drove a wedge in between the two inside planks, forcing them asunder, and causing the hard oak to crunch down into the quivering flesh and bone. The poor prisoner uttered the involuntary cry of a wounded animal, then bit his lips in shame at his own weakness, and firmly answered "no" to the magistrate's droning exhortation to tell about his

talks with Mademoiselle de Fleuron. Three times did the noble sufferer say "no," but when the fourth and last wedge was hammered home, he could only shake his head, and then he fainted dead away. He was unbound, laid upon the mattress, and after a surgeon had dressed his crushed and bleeding limbs, he was removed to a more comfortable apartment than he had first occupied.

Thanks to an iron constitution, the Count de Beaugrand recovered in the course of weeks from the effects of this torture. With a whole story of the Chapel Tower to himself, he could not exactly complain of a want of room; but he longed for other society than that of the turnkey who brought him his food, and for more air and light than came through the barred slits of windows in the tremendously thick walls. To escape from such a stronghold seemed so absolute an impossibility that he never thought of it.

He was wondering one day whether he should ever again have the happiness of seeing his beloved, when his turnkey came to tell him that there was a visitor for him, a woman, in appearance very shabby, who said she was the sister of his valet, and had some news for him. The count was just about to declare that he had never had a valet in Paris, but fortunately he kept this truth to himself, and followed the turnkey down-stairs to a room near the gate. There, indeed, a young woman, humbly dressed, was waiting for him; but he never remembered to have seen her before.

"Well, my good woman," asked he, "what can you possibly want of me? Haven't you sent for the wrong prisoner?"

"No, Monsieur the Count," said a voice, strange and yet vaguely familiar; "but will you please step this way—a little further from the door."

The young woman threw back her hood and allowed a lock of golden hair to peep out from under her ugly black wig. The Count de Beaugrand exclaimed, in wonder, "Mademoiselle de Fleuron!"

Mademoiselle de Fleuron it was. Warning her lover not to speak above a whisper, lest the men outside the door should hear, she told him, hurriedly, how she had used high influence to secure the favor of admission to the Bastille. She had come to save him, and the details of a plan of escape were concerted between them. Finally she drew out several finely-tempered files, and a coil

of slender but very strong rope from under her cloak, and the count with some difficulty managed to conceal them in his mantle. Then they parted.

Just one week later arrived the day appointed for the escape. It was a stormy day, and an even wilder night; it rained, and it hailed, and the wind moaned and howled around the eight gloomy towers of the Bastille, as if to anticipate that storm of humanity which was later to level those walls to the ground. But the noise of the elements favored the Count de Beaugrand's designs. As soon as the door had been bolted upon him for the last time that day, he flew to the window, opened it, and began work with his file on the triple range of bars that formed the first obstacle on his path to liberty. Oh, how slowly the bit of steel cut its way through the thick iron! It took him an hour to finish the first bar, but practice taught him how best to apply his strength, and the second was removed in far shorter time. But four hours were consumed in this work—four hours of hard labor and of horrible fear of discovery.

The count looked out into the darkness, but he could not see how far he was above ground. Then he tied his rope to a stout ring in the wall, and let the end drop out through the window. It was with the greatest difficulty he managed to squeeze through the narrow opening—an inch smaller and escape would have been impossible.

Once he looked back into his prison; then grasping the rope firmly, he began to let himself down by his hands. To the end of the rope he had come, and yet his feet did not touch ground. With his heart in his mouth he let go and fell—about two feet.

Turning his back to the Bastille, he ran, and almost immediately fell into water. It was the stream of the moat, but a few vigorous strokes carried him over, though the water was icy cold. Next he brought up against a stone wall, half way up which was the wooden gallery, where sentinels were supposed to pace back and forth all night. The inclement weather had driven them to their boxes for shelter. One of them had been bribed by *Mademoiselle de Fleuron* to leave a rope dangling from the gallery. The Count de Beaugrand soon found this rope, climbed up by it hand over hand, and quickly lowered himself over the outer wall.

Still another stream he had to swim, and the fortifications of the city were yet to be scaled. But friendly hands had placed a ladder for him, and the rest was easy.

On reaching the open country he did not have long to look for the promised carriage, and with tears of joy the Count de Beaugrand and *Marie de Fleuron* were soon locked in each other's arms.

They fled to Brussels, were married there, and for aught that anyone can say to the contrary, their descendants may be living there to the present day.

PENNY GAFFS OF LONDON.

ONE Saturday night I was strolling aimlessly along one of the principal market thoroughfares in the neighborhood of Hoxton, when my attention was drawn to a crowd of people outside a shop, the window of which, instead of being filled, as usual, with goods suited to the requirements of the locality, was occupied by a large canvas, painted all over in glaring colors with marvelous figures of performing dogs, fat women, skeletons, giants, red Indians, and a number of odd-looking animals, to classify which under their correct genus would have puzzled the most eminent living naturalist. In front of the shop, a piano-organ, evidently ordered to stop there for the occasion,

poured forth such cheering lays as, "Wait till the Clouds roll by, Jeanie," and "Mother, I've come Home to die"; varied by a lively jig or breakdown. A fat man with a red face and a very hoarse voice stood guard at the entrance to the shop—the inside of which was concealed from the eager gaze of those without by a dirty curtain of green baize stretched across the doorway—and endeavored to induce the crowd to pay their pennies and "walk in." His harangue, frequently repeated, was something like this: "Just a-goin' to begin, Signor Barberino's great traveling show—admission one penny—where can be seen the wonderful fat woman of California, and that hex-

traordinary freak o' nature, the armless child, which can write with its feet, and never knows the loss of it harms, 'cos it never had none, and also 'cos nater 'as perwided it with legs what does twice as well. Now then, there—stand aside, and let the lady pass." (This to a group of small boys who had got as near to the doorway as possible.) "Thank you, marm. Just a-goin' to begin, as exhibited before all the crowned 'eads of Europe and all the ryal family, and specially engaged to appear at the Himperial theatre of Peking, in Chiney. No dogs admitted, sir; and children must be paid for.

The impression left on most of the crowd seemed to be that if they missed that show, it would be a matter of regret to them for the rest of their natural life, for they pressed eagerly forward and paid their pennies. In about seven minutes the shop was crammed with a miscellaneous crowd of men, women, and boys and girls of that intermediate age between childhood and youth; little children in the charge of bigger children; and one or two of a better class of young men, who seemed to have dropped in merely for the fun of the thing.

I entered with a number of others, and obtained a place as near as I could to another hanging of green baize at the further end of the shop, for I imagined that behind this must be concealed some of the wonders so graphically painted on the canvas outside. The place having become full, this green baize was drawn aside, and a young man with a very East-end look handed out a short, fat, ugly, greasy-looking woman of about four feet in height, but weighing, I should think, about eighteen stone (three hundred and sixty pounds). She was dressed in a showy, tawdry material, covered with elaborate trimmings equally tawdry, bare about the back and arms, and certainly no pains had been taken to conceal her ample frontal charms. She was a mass of huge flabby fat; and had evidently been got into her present condition by methods which the faculty would no doubt condemn as harmful, though possible it *might* be constitutional. But she seemed pleased with the amount of attention she received. When the East-end young man had finished a minute account of her height, weight, age, measurement round the shoulders, arms, etc., members of the crowd were requested to "shake 'ands with the fat lady"; and an intimation was given that should any of the audience, in the per-

formance of this act of friendly greeting, pass any coin of the realm from their own into the lady's palm, why—well, the fat lady would not be offended.

This part of the ceremony having been got through, displaying on the part of the crowd an eager desire to get near enough to have the honor of touching the lady's hand, she was handed back again behind the baize screen; and another woman, the antipodes of the first one, made her appearance. She was about five feet eight inches in height, dressed in dirty white muslin, covered all over with pale blue and pink bows, and which barely reached her knees, displaying limbs of an unnatural thinness. Her arms were just the same, being no thicker than an ordinary broomstick; and in features she was horribly ugly. The East-end young man stated she was only four stone (eighty pounds) in weight, and gave various other particulars, which were all received by the audience with rapt attention. The sight of this hideous specimen of humanity was too much for me, and I elbowed my way to the door, thus missing the remaining attractions of the show, including the "hextraordinary freak o' nature, the armless child," whom, however, I was destined to see at a future date.

The following Monday afternoon I was passing on business through the same thoroughfare, when I observed the red-faced man with the hoarse voice standing, or rather lounging outside the entrance to the show. Having a quarter of an hour to spare, and feeling interested in the extraordinary beings I had seen on the previous Saturday, I accosted him, and proceeded to question him as to the working, prospects, etc., of his show.

"Where do you git the living curiosities from?"

"Well—lots o' places; ginerally, the least likely uns. Sometimes a pore family has some sort o' deformed child born, and they gits to hear as 'ow, in a show like ours" (he straightened himself up), "they gits taken good care on, and 'as a chance o' making something besides what we pays 'em. They comes and offers us the curiosity; and if we thinks it'll take, why, we gives 'em a sum down, and so much a week as long as they're with us; and precious glad they are of it, they are. You see, it's friendly all round; it pays us; it pays the poor people; it pleases the curiosity; and it amuses the

public. If we didn't take 'em into our show, they'd very likely git sent to the workus, or kicked about and ill-treated, 'cos they wouldn't be able to earn their own living. But when they're with us, their people gits kind o' proud of 'em, and will come and 'ang around the show, and seem glad if they can git any one to listen to 'em when they says they're related to the curiosities inside. There's always plenty of offers a-coming to us. Sometimes we buys a performing animal off some circus people when he's old and not good enough for them, but quite smart enough for us. Sometimes we gits 'em young, and trains 'em ourselves. Sometimes—— But there—it won't do to tell you heverything, or you'll be writing to the newspaper or something o' that kind."

This dark allusion to something mysterious heightened my curiosity, and I endeavored to draw him out further, but with no success; and he presently went on again as follows:—

"Pay? Yes, of course it pays, else we shouldn't keep on the same lay. There ain't much to be done anywheres in the day-time, and none at all just here; but of a night, we can fill the show as many times as we likes; and although it's only a penny, when there's sixty or seventy people go in every quarter of an hour, you see it mounts up. Lots on 'em goes in three or four times, they gits so interested. After one show's over and a fresh batch ready, some o' those who went in first'll come back and pay ag'in, p'r'aps bringing a friend, who was waiting to hear what the fust one said about it; and then they goes in again, 'cos they can't remember how much the fat lady weighs; or else they gits to feel a sort o' pride that they've bin to our show more times than any o' their mates. Lor' bless you, sir, I b'lieve some on 'em feels sorry they wasn't born a curiosity themselves! Yes, it's always best to git in what's called a low neighborhood, though why it should be called low, I dunno. Poor people's pennies are as good as any one else's, as fur as I can make out; and if any o' the young fellers ever gits obstoperus or a-teasing of the curiosities, we've only got to speak a bit sharp to 'em, and they're as quiet as a murderer after he's been and got 'anged."

The reader will observe that his similes were both forcible and original.

"Yes, about a week is the time for staying in one place—sometimes a fortnight; and we have run as long as three weeks when we've had fust-class curiosities. But we allus seems to be moving, and never gits settled. Of course, if one of our best attractions dies, as they often does if the weather's bad, we have to shut up for a time, 'cos it gits noised about that there ain't half so much to be seen as is announced. There never is, you say? Well, and wot if there ain't? Are we any worse than anyone else, I should like to know? Is the man what advertises medicine to cure everythink a-telling the truth, any more than us? No; but just 'cos it's us, and our show ain't quite all what it says on the canvas, we gits called rogues and swindlers."

I could get very little more out of the hoarse-voiced man. I had evidently touched his dignity; so, wishing him "crowded houses" wherever he went, I left him to his reflection on the inequalities of social adventurers generally.

Since then, I have been to scores of "penny gaffs," as they are called in the neighborhoods which are favored with their visits, and have seen natural deformities ("freaks of nature," the canvas generally has it), wild animals (generally poor beasts which want a lot of goading before their "hot blood" can be got up sufficiently to make them look fierce), fat women and skeletons, strong men and dwarfs, jugglers and acrobats, performing dogs, snake-charmers, and latterly "thought-readers"; the last mentioned having all been pupils of the leading thought-readers of the day, and paid a fabulous sum for their initiation into the many mysteries of the art. Sometimes the tricks done are really clever; sometimes as transparent as crystal; often, by the aid of an accomplice, who, despite his endeavors to appear to be one of the crowd, can generally be picked out by the discerning, because he invariably overdoes his part; and sometimes they are not tricks at all, but the people who go to see them are satisfied, and that is everything. They can give a penny where they could not afford sixpence; and if the entertainment is not intellectual, it is certainly not very harmful, the only really objectionable feature being the exhibition of natural, or, more correctly speaking, unnatural, human deformities.

OUR YOUNG FOLKS' STORY-TELLER.

"AN ANGEL FROM HEAVEN THAT CAME BY WATER."

BY E. P. SHILLABEE.

THERE was a poor man, a fisherman, who lived near the mouth of a swift river, who made his living by line and net, catching fishes in the sea that stretched away before him, and selling them to people who lived in a large town on the opposite side of the stream. He was a jolly old fellow, even in his poverty, but could hardly support himself and his wife—the only other member of his family except a cat and a tame crow. To tell the truth, he used to drink, and waste his money in buying that which did him no good, and sometimes, when he drank too much, he would scold his wife, and make her very unhappy. When sober, he was always singing and joking, and it was very pleasant to hear him.

"Wife," he would say, "we have not so much money as some of our neighbors, but we have a fine farm out here on the sea, and I shall get a harvest from it some day."

She would reply in a pleasant way, and they got along very well.

One morning, as the fisherman was preparing his lines before he went out in his boat, he saw something drifting down in the tide that puzzled him. It bore some resemblance to a boat, but yet he could not make it out to be a boat, either. It seemed to be some rough boards nailed together, like an oblong box, and it whirled round and round in the tide that swept in near the shore where he was standing. It came almost in to the land, and then an eddy struck it and bore it further out. He was still undecided whether he should get into his boat and go after it or not.

The morning was very pleasant and still, and the sun shone brightly on the water, dazzling the fisherman's eyes as he gazed. He stood shading his eyes with his hand, watching the object as it danced about in the rough tide, when he thought he heard a faint cry, as if from something in distress. He thought at first it might be a cry from the opposite shore, but a moment afterwards it seemed to proceed from the box.

"That's funny!" said he to himself. "What upon earth can it be that makes such music in that curious box? But I'll find out pretty quick."

He jumped into his boat and shoved her off in pursuit of the retreating box, which he soon reached. If anyone had been on the bank at the moment, observing him, they would have seen the start of surprise he gave, and the long whistle he sounded, as he looked at his prize. They would have also seen the eagerness with which he attached the strange vessel to his own, to tow it ashore. This was done in a minute, and as he stepped on the land, he cried out:—

"Wife, wife, make haste here! Here's one of our treasures come to us!"

"What is it?" she cried, hastening to the shore as fast as she could.

"Put on your spectacles, lass, and see!" he said, in great glee.

"Why if it isn't a baby!" she almost screamed, as she lifted the little waif from its strange conveyance.

"There's a plaything for you," said he, "better than the cat or crow; a real baby, ready-made and provided for," taking, as he spoke, a bundle of children's clothing from the box.

"'Tis a little angel from heaven, come by water," she replied.

There was no fishing that day for Hake Myers. The fisherman's name was Tobias Myers, but people called him Hake on account of his profession. "Call me anything you please," he would say, "if you don't call me too late to dinner." He and his wife were both completely demoralized, and forgot everything but the baby, and Hake and his wife stood watch and watch in taking care of it. At last Mrs. Hake came to her senses enough to say:—

"Well, but it isn't ours."

"I say 'tis ours," said Hake. "What I pick up in this river belongs to me; and this baby is mine by the right of capture."

They then turned the baby upside down and inside out, trying to find some name or word to show where it came from. Then they overhauled the box it came in—the "original package," Hake called it—for the same object, but nothing could be found. The box was roughly made, but stoutly put together, and pitched at the corners so that

ne water could leak through, and had evidently been intended by some one for the use to which it was applied. They concluded, therefore, that the little waif had been sent adrift with the intention of concealment. It was a little girl of apparently not more than a month old, as beautiful as a fairy, possessing charms enough, Hake said, to set up a writer of romances, and fully realized Mrs. Hake's assumption of her supernatural origin—an angel come from heaven by water.

There was a large town, up the river, called Bonnville, and the fisherman went there and made all the inquiry he could that would throw light upon the matter, but it was with the same feeling that we have when feeling in the dark for some obnoxious thing and dread lest we find it. He did not want to find an owner for his baby. He had notices written and put in the paper, but he could get no information, and the opinion expressed by everyone was that the little child had been cast off by wicked parents, or other persons, and left to die on the water, unless it should be rescued.

When it became settled that he had an undoubted right to the baby, he was very happy. Several offered to take it off his hands, telling him he was too poor to assume such a burden; but he would say:—

"Well, I am poor; but Heaven didn't send that box down to me without a good object, and I'm going to keep the baby."

And he did. He stuck to his resolution like a man; and, strangely enough, his luck changed. He found good markets for his "ketch," and the money came in briskly. He couldn't see how it was, but his wife knew that he had given up his drink, and that was why the dollars came in where they were so very poor before. Both were very happy, and all because of that little baby that came, as Mrs. Hake would have it, "from heaven in a rough pine box."

They named her May, because it was May when she was found, though the school-master of the district called her "*Fleur del Mer*," a name by which she was everywhere known. She was as white as a lily, and the three pets—the baby, the cat and the crow—presented a strange contrast, the cat being yellow and the crow black. They were all the best friends in the world.

She wasn't to be always a baby. She grew to be a sweet and pleasant child, the delight of everybody. She early learned her story

from the old folks. Hake would take her upon his knee, and as he fondled her curls, he would say:—

"How strange it was that I should ha' been a-standin' there on the shore, and seen that 'ere thing comin' down in the tide, and hearin' somethin' cry, and goin' out there and findin' you, my little darlin', layin' there as sweet as a picter! It makes me feel bad when I think s'posin' I hadn't gone, and where would she have been, my little heart's delight?" And the old fisherman would cry at the very thought that he might have missed her.

Thus she was early led to regard the sea as a sort of mother to her. The moaning sound of the waves was a lullaby, and when the storm raged and the big waves rolled in on Ragged Rock Point, she would hear it with silent awe, deeming it a note of anger and reproof. She loved to sing of the sea, and there were many songs taught her by the people of the little hamlet in which she lived. Such of them as spoke of the sea as possessing motherly attributes were especial favorites. Thus she would sing:—

"Come," says the voice of the motherly sea,
'Give me thy young heart, glowing and warm;
Here in my breast is a heaven for thee,
Safe from contention—safe from earth's storm.
Dearest one, dearest one,
Never a breath of the storm-king thou'lt know,
Safe in my palace the billows below.'"

"Are there palaces beneath the sea?" she would ask the old fisherman, pausing in her song. And then he would tell her stories of the mermaids and the bowers of coral under the waves, and tales about palaces made of gold and gems, and of the men of the sea luring maidens of earth down to their homes, and all the wonderful lore of the ocean, to which she would break forth:—

"Let me enfold thee in loving embrace,
Tenderly, tenderly, close in my arms;
Sorrow shall ne'er in thy heart have a place,
Ne'er shalt thou suffer earth's cares and alarms,
Dearest one, dearest one,
Never thou'lt sigh if thou comest to me
And bide in the love of the motherly sea.'"

The old fisherman would hug her to his heart, and then turn her sweet face to the light and look into her dreamy eyes, seeing something there that he could not understand, and which she did not understand herself. It was a vague and indefinable something—a longing—a fascination—with the sea for its theme, with which her life seemed woven.

Thus she was, at ten years, a fairy child, tiny in form, playing with her associates in the gleefulness of joyous youth; but oftener she roamed along the shore and communed with her mother, the sea.

"Mother, dear mother," she would say, "come to me and love me. I am very sad because you do not come. I want to go with you down among the coral groves, where the mermaids sing, and the jewels are, that I may reward those who are so good to me."

Then she would listen for the response, but heard nothing but the murmur of the sea.

One day as she thus roamed along the shore, with her usual invocation, her heart felt unusually lifted up and happy. The day was bright and beautiful. There was no breeze stirring, and the waves came to the shore in gentle ripples, singing and sparkling on the sand. She had bid the old fisherman good-by as he rowed out for his accustomed toil, had exchanged a pleasant word with the fisherman's wife as she stood upon the bank, and was now alone. She sat down on a stone that overlooked the sea, which shimmered in the sun, and rose and fell quietly as an infant breathing in slumber. Her full heart found vent in words:—

"Come from your caverns,
Ye maids of the sea;
Don your green mantles
And hasten to me.
Here on the silver sands
Bright billows play,
We'll dance to their musical
Ripple all day.
Come, oh come,
Sweet maids of the sea,
Here on the shore
I am waiting for thee."

She paused a moment, as if waiting to hear the echo of her own sweet voice, when she was startled by a sound as if beneath the waves, that seemed to chime with the ripple that broke upon the shore, and harmonized with the strain of her own melody:—

"Maid of the golden hair,
Child of the main,
Your love we may not share
Though we are fane;
Prisoned by spirits fell,
Here we are held,
They will but break the spell,
By love compelled.
Thrice turn with the sun,
Twice bow to the sea;
Thy desire is won—
We are free! we are free!"

She listened, wonderstruck, and then, clapping her hands, cried out joyously:—

"I will do as the sea-maidens say, and they will come and play with me."

She accordingly turned round thrice with the sun, and then bowed herself as many times to the sea, when there arose from it a strain of the sweetest music. Colored fish were seen swimming to and fro in the water, like colored lanterns, their sides flashing in the sunlight. Then she heard a chorus of voices coming nearer, singing:—

"Free as the air to come and go,
Free as the waves in ceaseless flow,
All the freedom that we share
Cometh from her love and care.
Bring her gems from coral caves,
Bring her flowers and jewels bright,
Tinged with hues of golden waves,
Flashing in the upper light.
Bless the maiden, bright and fair,
The sea-maid's sister, *Fleur del Mer*."

The sea assumed a more beautiful hue, the waves made sweeter music on the beach, the ripples in the sunshine danced as though possessed of glad consciousness, and the little girl saw rising from the sea a chariot of gold and blue, drawn by dolphins, and in the chariot a maiden of most gracious aspect, while round her played in the water a number of others, equally lovely, and all bearing in their hands caskets and branches of sea-spray that bore unnumbered gems. They approached little May, and laid their caskets and the branches crusted with gems at her feet. She looked at them bewildered, not knowing what to say, or which way to turn. She had long wished to meet the people of the sea, but now they were there she did not know what to do. They were clothed in sea-green dresses; with ocean mosses in their hair. Each had a belt of diamonds and rubies about the waist, and in the hair were gems more costly than earth had ever seen. Their feet were bare, and the little girl looked to see if they were not web-footed.

After a moment or two, seeing the little girl's surprise, they sang, each one having a golden harp suspended from her shoulder, with which they accompanied the song:—

"Maid of the sunny hair,
Child of the sea,
We come thy sport to share,
By thee made free;
Thy will unloosed the spell,
Holding us bound,
Thy praise our song shall swell—
Queen thou art crowned."

Then the leader came forward, and placed on her head a crown of sea-mosses sprinkled

with diamonds, and put in her hand a sceptre made from the wood of ocean forest, and the rest opened their caskets of brilliants in silence.

This was all too formal for little May; so much dignity became oppressive to her, and then she took off her crown and laid her sceptre by, saying:—

"I don't want to be a queen; I had rather run on the sands and play with you, or have you tell me stories about your home down under the sea."

So she asked their names, and learned that the principal one, who was a prince's daughter, was named Gulnare; the rest, severally, Ripple, Seafern, Billow, Spraybloom, Raregem and Dultaleaf. So they became very sociable, and walked and ran along the shore, and played with little May till she was tired. Then they sat down on the green bank, and they told great stories about the things under the sea—so much more beautiful, they said, than things on the shore; where there were palaces of gold and diamonds, and marine forests, and big fish that they rode as if they were horses, some of which were the dolphins attached to the chariot before them. They told her that a big genie had laid a spell on them, so that they might not come to earth, but that they had been attracted towards her by her love of the sea, and had got so near that they could give her the charm by which the spell was broken, for which they were very grateful. The stories told the little girl were so marvelous that she became carried away by them, so to speak.

"I wish I could go down in the halls of the sea," she said.

"Is this your real wish?" said the princess.

"Yes."

"Will you give up everything here for it?"

She thought a moment of those who had done so much for her, had been parents to her, and loved her so well, and her resolution was shaken. Then she thought how poor they were, and she could go down where the jewels grew and get as many as she wanted, and she could come back after a time, and make them rich and happy. So she put her hand in that of the princess, and said:—

"I do."

Then there was a great clapping of hands among them, and the chariot with the dol-

phins drove up to the shore, into which stepped little May and the princess. They rode away out into the sea, and passed by where the poor old fisherman sat fishing, little thinking that his pretty little May was leaving him. She saw him, and begged the princess to let her speak to him, but she could not do it, because if she did, it would make a child of earth of her; whereas she was now a daughter of the sea. She mourned a little at this, but soon the novelty of her situation dispelled her grief.

They sank down into the ocean—down, down, down; but *Fleur del Mer* felt no inconvenience, because she was a child of the sea, like the rest. As they went down, big fishes came and put their noses into the chariots, as if to see whether they were good to eat or not; but the princess rapped them with her whip, and they scampered away.

At last they reached a big city, surrounded with marine trees of rare beauty. The houses were of splendid stone, that shone in the light like gold. From the limbs of the trees were gems of large size, growing like fruit. Sea-men, and sea-women, and sea-children, ran in and out, or rather swam in and out, among the trees or houses. There were stores and banks in the streets, kept by fish. The sharks were bankers; the pikes, merchants; the swordfish were soldiers; the perch, speculators; the halibut, landlords; the bluefish, lawyers; the monkfish, parsons. She had no time to note the fashions before they reached the gate of the palace.

Here was magnificence such as little May had never dreamed of. A huge swordfish guarded the door, who received them very respectfully. They entered, and from the door of the reception hall it was one blaze of jewels. There was no sun, and the light was all from these brilliants, that seemed to have the light prisoned in them.

The king, the father of the princess, was on his throne, and when little May was presented to him, he got down from his seat and kissed her, and told her he had, for her sake, given orders that the old fisherman, her father, should always have good fare.

"Which was a very fair thing, your majesty," said the king's jester, who was present, a lobster-looking chap, whereat all the courtiers laughed.

Little May was then given the freedom of the palace, and she went where she chose among all the splendid things. The ladies

of honor were instructed to treat her as well as they did the princess, and the two were very good friends. Sometimes, however, she would think of the dear old couple she had left at home, and for a moment would wish she were with them; but some novelty would attract her, and she would forget.

Thus things went on for several years. She was fully accustomed to the manner of living, slept on a bed of algæ, and delighted in submarine society. One day she had fallen asleep on a bank of sea-moss, and was indulging in a troubled dream, that mingled fancies of both scenes in her mind. She heard voices that reproached her for her desertion—heartless they called it. Then there came a cry that seemed to shake the palace to its foundation, so full of anguish was it:—

"May! May! my dear, darling little girl! Where is May?"

It was the voice of the fisherman, and she wondered, in her sleep, how he could have come there. Could he have come by submarine telegraph? or could he have come down on one of his own codlines? But as she queried, the voice kept saying:—

"May! May! Where is my little May?"

The trees seemed to have found tongues, and all of them echoed the sound—"May! May!"—when she awoke in the green sedge that grew beside the river where her earth home was; and as she started up there was the fisherman, and the fisherman's wife, and several of the fisherman's neighbors, old and young, coming towards her, the old man's face dark with anxiety. As soon as he saw her he ran towards her, his arms extended, and his heart overflowing with delight. He took her in his arms, and held her to him as though he could not give her up,

kissing her with his rough mouth as though he never could kiss her enough.

"The dear little angel!" said the old fisherman's wife; "she came from heaven by water, and we thought she had gone back the same way."

"Where is Gulnare?" said May, as soon as she could find breath.

"Who?" asked the fisherman.

"Gulnare, the princess," she replied. "And did you get the treasure I left on the shore?"

They looked astonished, and shook their heads at each other.

"How did I get here?" she continued; "did the dolphins bring me in the chariot?"

"No, darling," said the old fisherman; "we missed you when I came home yesterday, and thought you were lost, and now we find you hid in the serge, all safe and sound, thank the Lord!"

She told them all the story about the visit of the sea-maidens, and the treasure they brought, and how she went down into the ocean with them, and her life there, and how it had been interrupted by his calling for her. It was hard to convince her that it had been all a dream; but she was still only ten years old, and this was strong evidence against the fact of her prolonged visit. So she grew to regard it as a vision, and till she was much older, she deemed there was more of truth in it than attends most dreams.

She never discovered her unnatural parents, but lived to be a comfort to the fisherman and wife in their helplessness, and to a worthy young neighbor, also, whose wife she at last became. But the fisherman's wife affirmed, to the day of her death, that she was an angel from heaven, who came to them by water.

THE STRANGE VOICE IN THE ORCHARD.

BY LOUISE DUFEE.

IT was long past Will's bedtime, but he was still up, leaning meditatively out of his bedroom window. It was a still, sultry summer night; not even a leaf stirred in the sweet, spicy air; nothing in motion save the fireflies that were flitting about with their tiny lamps, to see that every flower was safely asleep and dreaming. And they all were, save the evening primroses, that kept their eyes wide open and fixed on the stars

all night long, and slept all the bright day, in spite of the bees, and butterflies, and sunbeams that kept trying to pry open their drowsy lids.

Will was a city boy who was spending his summer vacation at his grandfather's farm. He had never been in the country before, and he thought it was a very nice place, with its laden fruit-orchards, its fish-ponds, its trees full of shyly-hidden birds'-nests, its

barnyards full of funny, waddling ducks and geese, lordly, strutting turkeys, and sober, matronly hens, that gossiped to each other in the sunshine with their thin, queer, hoarse voices; with its frikking colts and calves, and meek, large-eyed cows, that chewed their cud with such a deeply meditative air. Then there were the berry pastures, running over with juicy fruit that was free to all, and the great, dark, mysterious woods, where there were as many wonders as in a fairy book. Will thought he never should tire of it all, and wished he could stay there forever. He had more fox-traps set up in the woods than you can count,—more stakes stuck up in the field to mark sparrows' nests, more fishing-poles cut and laid by for future use. And though he had only been there two days, he knew where such a quantity of squirrels took up their abode! He had captured a frightened little owl in the barn, found out where the old white turkey had stolen her nest in the woods, rescued six ambitious ducklings who had just escaped from the shell from a watery grave in the mill-pond, they having ventured thereon before they had learned to swim, in spite of the clamorous remonstrances of their frantic hen-mother. He caught fish enough for breakfast the night before, had driven old Dobbin to the mill and back again all by himself, had learned to milk the cows, taught the calves to turn somersaults, killed four snakes, and had concluded to be a farmer when he grew up.

Grandma sent him up to bed early that night because he looked tired, and then as he was going with the haymakers to the back-lot in the morning, he must be up with the larks. But though Will went up-stairs, he had no idea of going to bed for some time. To tell the truth, he had a plan in his head that he was determined to carry out in the darkness, after everybody was in bed and asleep; and you may be sure that it was nothing good that he was to do, else he wouldn't have been so secret about it, and chosen the night to do it in.

Directly opposite his grandfather's house was a fine orchard belonging to the Widow Smith, and the little cottage where she lived was right in the midst of it. Will's eye had been on that orchard ever since he had been there. Not on account of its long-necked, juicy summer pears, nor the early apples that pushed their blushing cheeks temptingly through the green leaves, nor

the downy peaches that dangled their honeyed balls over the southern wall. His grandfather had an abundance of all these, but they had not the charm of being forbidden fruit. Mrs. Smith had a half-dozen plum trees, all in range of her window (as well as Will's), that were laden with the most delicious fruit. It was enough to make one's mouth water just to look at them, and Will couldn't help looking at them all the time. I am quite sure that if they hadn't been so provokingly under Mrs. Smith's eye, he would have helped himself to a few of them long before this, though he had never stolen anything in his life, save a bunch of fire-crackers from his brother Ben's pocket on the last fourth of July. He knew that it was wrong to do so, but he kept trying to comfort himself when his conscience accused him of being a thief, by saying that they belonged to him as much as they did to Ben, for didn't he lend him a part of the money with which to buy them? and he never paid him in the world!

But those plums! Oh, dear me! Who wouldn't take one or two of them if he got the chance? he thought. If they tasted as they looked there never was anything so delicious. There they hung in the glowing sunshine, like little transparent globes brimming with rosy, purple wine and fairly melting with sweetness! The birds pecked daintily at their velvety skins, the wasps dipped their little yellow bills into their honey, and the bees clustered and hummed in the trees as if they had been filled with scented blossoms instead of fruit. They were fully ripe now, but their owner was going to leave them out another one of these warm bright days, to let the sunbeams pinch their freckled cheeks to a juicier mellowness.

Will couldn't keep them out of his mind by night or day. He hung round Mrs. Smith's fence until she began to think that his conduct was suspicious, and watched his every movement through her green spectacles, and whatever she was doing, kept one eye on her plums. Then she had a great, ugly yellow dog who was set to keep watch over the orchard, who showed his flashing teeth to every one who ventured near, though Will didn't consider him half as formidable as his mistress. However, he concluded it was best to be shy of her, and began to show great zeal to do something in her service. When he saw her out, pail in hand, on her way to the meadow-spring for

water, he ran up to her at once, and gallantly offered to be her water-carrier himself, which offer she accepted gladly, for it was no short distance to the spring, and the sun was scorching. Then when her great flock of turkeys strayed away into the backlot in search of grasshoppers, he took pains to drive them home to her, though it was a deal of trouble. And while she was thanking him at her door, and telling him that whenever he wanted any sweet apples to just reach under her fence and he would find a plenty of windfalls under the corner tree, he interrupted her by remarking how wonderfully nice her plums looked. But she was deaf to the hint, and Will made up his mind that her turkeys might stray to the other end of the world for all him, and that when she wanted any more water she might bring it herself.

"But," said he to himself, on his way home, "I know of a way to get at those plums in spite of that silly old dog, and I will, to-night. It won't be stealing—she owes me enough to buy a few of them, for grandpa said that she always had to pay Tom Jones ten cents when he did errands for her; and haven't I been running for her ever since I came here?"

So just before dark he coaxed Barby, grandma's maid-of-all-work, to give him a great piece of cold steak that was left from dinner, and crept slyly towards the fence.

"Tige, Tige, Tige," he called, in a low tone; and Tige, whose ears were sharper than those of his mistress, even, heard the summons, and came toward Will, growling his savage, muffled growl all the while. But when he smelled the meat he ceased to keep up those signs of animosity, and commenced to wag his stump of a tail with a show of friendliness; for Tige was a cunning dog, after all, and it was not often that he even smelled fresh meat.

Will held the tempting steak over his shoulder, and whistling softly to Tige, led the way across the road and over his grandfather's fence, into an empty tool-house that was at a safe distance from both his grandfather's house and that of Mrs. Smith; and there was a strong lock upon the door. Tige followed the meat, of course, and when Will had once got him into the tool-house, he threw the steak down to him, hurried out himself, and after locking the door securely, he put the key into his pocket and went into the house.

In the meantime, Mrs. Smith had milked her cow, and was just now lighting her candle to go up-stairs to bed, without a suspicion that faithful Tige was not at his post of duty, for he usually curled down in the tall grass and was quite hidden from view. Will was elated with the success of his project, thus far; but then what if Tige, when he found himself a prisoner, should make such an uproar that it would reach the sharp ears of his mistress? He listened at the door, but there was not a sound from the tool-house as yet.

"I wish I could find a great bone that would keep him gnawing all night; then he'd keep still fast enough," he thought. And so, when no one was looking, he made a raid on the pantry, for Barby always had a supply of cold joints put by to serve as a lunch for the haymakers the next day. Tige received it with a satisfied bark when Will thrust it through a little crack in the door to him, and nothing more was heard from him that night. Then, following grandma's suggestion, Will retired to his own room and sat down by the window, where we found him at the beginning of the story.

Will thought that it must be as late as eleven o'clock now. The house was as still as could be, for every one save himself had drifted away into dreamland. And the same silence reigned without, only the song of some wakeful little brook sounded softly from the roadside, and now and then some drowsy little bird, mistaking the yellow moonshine that filled its nest for sunlight, would awake and twitter. Will was sleepy enough, but he pried his heavy lids open with his fingers, and looked at the plum trees. Oh, how juicy and cool the plums would be with the dew on them this sultry night! He would fill his pocket, and stingy old Mrs. Smith wouldn't be any the wiser.

He waited a few minutes longer, then putting on his hat, took his shoes in his hand, and crept down-stairs in his stocking feet, his heart thumping loudly all the while; for Barby was said to sleep with one eye open, and the stairs *would* creak. He expected every moment to hear her scream out "Who's there?" But no such unfortunate thing happened, and he was soon safely out of doors, creeping stealthily over the dewy grass toward the moon-silvered plum trees.

He was a little startled to see that the curtain was up in Mrs. Smith's bedroom

window; but then, it did not look out directly into the orchard, but toward the road, though one could have seen the plum trees and any thievish boy there might have been in them by opening the window. But Will concluded that she must be fast asleep by this time, if she didn't sit up all night to watch her cherished fruit. So he climbed lightly into one of the trees, making no more noise than a little wind might have done amid their creaking branches. The ripe, delicious plums dropped into his hands as soon as he touched them; but just as he was holding one to his lips—one like a transparent goblet of spiced honey—there came a cry from some very near region! But who could tell from whence? It so filled him with terror that he lost his hold on the limb to which he was clinging, and fell headlong to the ground!

"Whip poor Will!" the voice kept saying, and it sounded as if it came out of the air—such a high, shrill ghostly voice as was never heard before, though Will thought that it did sound a little as Mrs. Smith's did when she was scolding Tom Jones for tramping through her clover fields, only a thousand times more terrible! "Whip poor Will! Whip poor Will!" it shrieked, in Will's very ears, and half frantic with fear, he picked himself up and ran straight forward, the nearest way to the fences, never heeding that there was a blackberry hedge in the way, as well as Mrs. Smith's posy bed, and along the fence in that direction a row of prickly thorn trees. He left pieces of his coat as well as his skin, amid the blackberry brambles, then jumped through the thorny branches to the topmost rails of the fence; and as evil fates would have it, that rail was loose, and fell, after Will touched it, with a great crash, bumping against the other rails, to the ground! The blood was streaming over his face, the result of his encounter with the brambles, and he had fallen from the fence onto a pile of not very soft rocks; but he did not give a thought to his injuries. Fear swallowed up every other sense; for now, mingled with the other ghastly voice that still kept up its terrible cry, sounded the real voice of Mrs. Smith, calling "Tige, Tige, Tige!" from her chamber window.

Will sprang on to his grandfather's back piazza with one bound, and then ventured to take a little breath.

"Land sake alive!" said Barby's voice overhead, in a sort of stage whisper.

"Goodness gracious me, William!" she added, getting a glimpse of his terror-stricken face in the moonlight.

And down she came, finding him frantically engaged in bolting the door with fingers that trembled like leaves.

"Goodness gracious me! Land sake alive!" she ejaculated again and again.

And Will begged her to be silent until he could get breath to tell her what was the matter.

"I will," said Barby; "but land sake alive! I'm all of a tremble! I thought 'twas only somebody stealing Mrs. Smith's purple gages!"

Will made her promise not to tell his grandfather and grandmother, and then poured the whole dark tale into her sympathetic ear.

Barby listened with a look of profound astonishment, though seeming rather amused than shocked that he should have been stealing Mrs. Smith's plums.

"But who could it have been screaming out that way?" said she, wonderingly, when Will told her about the mysterious voice.

"There! there 'tis, now," said Will, trembling all over and turning pale, as the same cry, "Whip poor Will!" sounded again through the darkness.

Barby doubled herself up with laughter, and sat down on the stairs. Great tears streamed down her cheeks, and she shook all over.

"Well," she said at last, between the spasms, "I s'pose I may as well go and let out the dog, and then she'll never know who got into her orchard."

Very soon Tige's bark resounded through the still air, and Barby came creeping back into the kitchen again. And though she bound up poor Will's bruises very tenderly, she laughed all the time, in spite of his sorry looks and the great tears on his cheeks.

"Well," said Barby, "it's lucky for you that your grandpa and grandma are sound sleepers. And we'll go to bed now, and forget all about it. But don't never do such a thing again, Master Will, cos you know it's wicked."

"No, Barby," said Will, solemnly, "I never will steal anything again."

And he kept his word, though it was not long before he discovered that it was only a bird—a poor, harmless little whip-poor-will—that had frightened him so.

THE HOUSEKEEPER.

MACKEREL BALLS.—Let the fish stand in water over night. In the morning pour some boiling water over it, pick it carefully from the bones, and add an equal quantity of cold, mashed potatoes, two beaten eggs and a pinch of pepper. Shape into balls, and fry in hot butter.

STEWED HADDOCK.—Place the haddock in a pan of salted water, and simmer one hour. Lay the fish, minus the head, on a platter; pour over it drawn butter; then spread with mashed potatoes enough to cover it nicely. Over the potatoes spread the whites of four eggs. Put in the oven and bake a light brown.

FISH CHOWDER.—Take any large fish and cut it in thin slices; lay some slices of fat bacon at the bottom of the pot, and then a layer of fish, onions, cracker dust, red and black pepper, salt and butter; then more layers, until all the fish shall have been used. Cover the whole with water, and cook until well done.

TO CLEAN OIL-FINISHED PAINT OR HARD WOOD use weak tea, almost cold, and remove the dust and discoloration, and then rub it over with a flannel cloth dipped in furniture polish, made of one-third linseed oil, one-third turpentine and one-third vinegar; shake it well together in a bottle, and pour it into a saucer and rub hard. It is a very satisfactory polish.

TO BAKE A LEG OF MUTTON.—Take a leg of mutton weighing six or eight pounds; have the bone removed, and fill the cavity with a dressing made of four ounces of suet, two eggs, two ounces of chopped ham, six ounces of stale bread, one onion, a little sweet marjoram, nutmeg, salt and pepper; sew up, lay in a pan, add a teacup of water, and put in a hot oven; baste frequently, and cook three hours.

SPONGE BISCUIT FOR DESSERT.—Take half a pound of flour, three-fourths pound sifted sugar. Beat the whites of six eggs by themselves; add the beaten yolks and toss them together. Put in them a little grated lemon peel, then the sugar, and flit well with an egg-whisk. Stir in the flour with a wooden spoon, and put the mixture in small patty-pans to bake, with sifted sugar to glaze sprinkled over the top.

SALMON CROQUETTES.—Boil half a pint of milk, thicken with a tablespoonful of flour, and let it become cold. Mince a pound can of salmon, or one pound of fresh salmon. When very fine add a saltspoonful of white pepper. Moisten the minced salmon with the boiled milk, work to

a paste, and add bread crumbs if too thin. When wanted, shape into cakes, rolls, or cones, dip in egg and crumbs, and fry in hot fat.

WHITE BEAN SOUP.—Soak one quart of beans over night, drain off the water, put the beans in the stock pot with one carrot, one onion, one tablespoonful of prepared seasoning, three quarts of water. Let them simmer four hours; then strain through a colander, stirring it over the stove, and remove the scum while boiling. When finished, add a pat of good butter, a little sugar, and a little chopped parsley. Serve with fried crust of bread.

BAKED SOUP FOR INVALIDS.—I find this receipt of use for invalids. It is easy to make, and cooks cannot well blunder. Take a pound of juicy steak, from which all the fat has been removed; cut it up in pieces of about an inch square; salt and pepper it slightly; take a stone jar to hold two pints; pour into it a pint and a half of cold water and a teaspoonful of whole rice; cover the jar with a saucer, and let it bake slowly for four hours; remove any fat present.

CLAM PATTIES.—Chop the clams fine, put them in a saucepan with a little milk and a portion of their own liquor, and stir in the yolk of an egg; season with pepper and salt to taste. When they are scalded add a tablespoonful of butter mixed with a little flour, let it simmer until the flour is cooked, then remove. Have ready some puff paste or other rich crust, with which line patty pans, fill them with the clams, make a ring of the paste to cover them partially, and bake in a quick oven.

COFFEE PUDDING.—Soak the crumbs of a small, stale loaf in some very strong black coffee; melt one ounce of butter, mix it with one ounce of sugar, one ounce chopped almonds and the beaten yolks of four eggs, then the whisked whites of three; squeeze out the bread slightly, and beat it into the other ingredients, allowing sufficient to make the mixture of the consistency of a cabinet pudding; pour it into a buttered mold and bake it in a moderately hot oven, or boil and serve with sweet sauce.

DELICATE VEAL CUTLETS.—Trim the cutlets and shape them; brush them over with egg; sprinkle with bread crumbs with which salt, pepper and minced savory herbs have been mixed, and press the crumbs down; fry a delicate brown in good pure lard or butter; be careful not to dry them. The following makes a very palatable gravy: Dredge a little flour, add a

piece of butter the size of a walnut; brown it, then pour as much boiling water as is required; season with pepper and salt and a little lemon juice; give one boil, and pour it over cutlets. Garnish with parsley or watercress.

HOW TO WASH WOOLEN BLANKETS.—Select a bright, sunny day with a brisk breeze, so that they may dry rapidly. Have the water as hot as the hands will bear, and dissolve the soap in the water, avoiding rubbing it on the blankets unless very soiled spots render it imperative. After rubbing it through this water, thoroughly rinse through two waters of the same temperature as the rubbing water. Wring as dry as possible; then let some one take hold of each end of the blanket and pull evenly and strong to bring it to its former size before drying. Pin as evenly as possible on the line, and let it become perfectly dry. Treated in this way no ironing is necessary. The secret of washing flannels without shrinking is to have all the water the same temperature (and after long experience I prefer hot to lukewarm water), and also to thoroughly rinse all soap from the blanket.

TWO WAYS OF MAKING SAUCE SOUBISE.—Parboil some onions a few minutes, mince them thoroughly and put them in a saucepan with plenty of butter, a pinch of sugar, and pepper and salt to taste; let them cook slowly, so that they do not take color; add a tablespoonful of flour, and stir well. When they are quite tender pass them through a sieve. Dilute the onion pulp with sufficient milk to make it into sauce; make it hot and serve; or put into a saucepan some parboiled onions, butter, sugar, pepper and salt, as above; add a tablespoonful or two of rice (previously boiled in water for ten minutes); let the whole cook slowly, and when the onions are quite tender add a tablespoonful of grated Parisian cheese; stir the mixture, and pass it through a sieve. Add as much milk or cream as may be necessary; warm the sauce and serve.

HOW TO KILL MOTHS.—The destruction of moths is one of the greatest vexations which careful housekeepers have to contend with, and their depredations are not to be remedied after they have once made inroads. Houses heated by furnaces are especially predisposed to have moths, but every housekeeper must be on the watch for them, for, from the time that the windows begin to be left open the trouble begins. Heavy carpets sometimes do not require taking up every year unless in constant use. Take out the tacks from these, fold the carpets back, wash the floor in strong suds with a tablespoonful of borax dissolved in them. Dash with insect powder, or lay with tobacco leaves along the edge, and retack. All moths can be kept away and the eggs destroyed by this means. Ingrain or other carpets, after shaking, are brightened by

sprinkling a pound of salt over the surface, and sweeping carefully and thoroughly. It is also an excellent plan to wipe off the carpet with borax water, using a thick flannel cloth wrung tightly, taking care not to wet it, but only to dampen. Open the windows and dry the carpet before replacing the furniture. Other woollens, including blankets and wearing apparel, must be beaten and brushed and folded smoothly. Be careful to clean every spot with ammonia water, not too strong, and a dark woollen cloth. Tie pieces of camphor into little bundles and put one in each article. Wrap the articles in newspapers, as printers' ink is a great preventive of moths, and sew them up in strong sheeting bags, labeled so it will not be necessary to open them during the summer except for use. This is a good way for those who do not possess cedar boxes, and the articles need have no other care if every spot is treated as directed and the garments are not left hanging in the closet too long before putting away for the season.

Anyone moving into a house should see that the rooms are disinfected. No agent can guarantee that there has been no infectious disease in the house; he does not know anything about it. Commence at the cellar first and go through each room. This should be done before you take possession, if possible; but if it is not convenient it should be done before you get settled. An ounce of sulphur may save many a dollar of a doctor's bill. Sulphur and alcohol are the most satisfactory disinfectants, and they possess another advantage in being inexpensive. The alcohol is only necessary to cause the sulphur to ignite quickly. The sulphur will burn without it, and if you have no alcohol take three or four lighted matches and place them on top of the sulphur and it will soon take fire. All silver or gilt should be removed from the room while the sulphur is burning; otherwise they will be very much discolored, and in some cases destroyed. In houses that have furnaces matters are considerably simplified. The sulphur can be put in the furnace, all the registers can be opened, and the whole house disinfected at the same time. If the fumes become too strong, open the cold air shaft and the windows, and they will soon be dissipated.

Probably many of our readers know of and use James Pyle's Pearline, the newest thing in soap. Just a hint to those who do not: "Murder will out," and if Pearline did not do all that is claimed for it, the fact would have been proven long ago. Pearline came to the relief of overworked women just ten years ago, an entirely new idea, and now over one million families use it in place of soap. The reason is obvious, and we would advise our readers who are not using it at least to try it, and see if they, too, do not approve of this great invention for reducing the drudgery in woman's hardest work.

CURIOUS AND OTHER MATTERS.

HINTS ON THE MICROSCOPE FOR BEGINNERS.

—The animal kingdom presents such a large field for research that any number of observers may work without clashing, though nothing is more conducive to the accurate recording of results than working with another. The primary and microscopical forms of the animal kingdom are those to be found in a pond and any stagnant water containing decomposing vegetable matter. Little living cells swimming about by means of fine hair processes called "cilia," and larger creatures, with only one eye, called "cyclops," and still larger ones with a wheel-like process at their heads, giving them the name of "rotifers," are a few only of the forms met with in these places. There are many intermediate creatures between these and the insects, but these latter are so full of interest and so easily obtainable that the student may advantageously work for an indefinite period on this class alone.

First, clearly understand what an insect is, so that it may not be confounded with such creatures as the spider, centipede, etc. An insect, then, is an animal with six legs, four wings, a head with compound eyes and two antennæ, and apparatus for seizing and ingesting food, the jaws always working horizontally instead of perpendicularly, as ours do; a thorax which bears the wings and legs, and is mostly quite distinct from the abdomen. There are modifications in these animals, of course, which lead to many subdivisions—thus bugs and fleas, which have no perceptible wings are called apterous, or wingless insects, etc.

The wings of insects should be soaked in turpentine, and then carefully laid in a drop of Canada balsam, placed on a warm glass slide and covered with a piece of thin glass, and carefully pressed by means of an American paper-clip, set aside and allowed to dry, and then cleaned with spirit after some days, and examined. All parts of insects may be so treated. Always be careful to label everything before putting aside.

The tongues of various insects are very interesting; to obtain them, split the head in two, and pick out with a needle fastened in a pen-holder. The eyes are curious; the house-fly has about 4000; some beetles have as many as 80,000. The antennæ, or horns, assume all shapes, and make beautiful objects. The scales from the wings of moths and butterflies are well worthy attention, the merest atom, when magnified, resembling a feather in general appearance. Legs present a variety of forms; in the foreleg of the cricket the ear exists; the foot of the common house-fly is furnished with suckers, by which it holds on to the walls and ceilings.

The eggs of insects are many of them curious and beautiful; a most instructive lesson may be learned by watching the changes within them during hatching. These creatures breathe by means of tubes, with an elastic spiral lining to prevent their collapse; if a louse be allowed to starve to death, and when dry mounted quickly on hard balsam, the air tubes may often be distinctly seen.

The gizzards or stomachs of insects, especially of beetles, crickets, etc., are full of teeth for grinding down food. A little practice soon enables you to find this organ. Slit open the abdomen, and remove the intestines with a needle, when you will observe a round and comparatively hard body in their course; cut it off, slit it open, wash with a camel's-hair pencil, and mount as above. On examination rows of teeth will be seen.

BRAINS — MAN'S AND MONKEY'S. — Until lately it was supposed that the relative weight of the brain, as compared with the body, was greater in man than in any of the lower animals; but, alas! for poor human nature, it is now known that some of the smaller South American monkeys have, proportionally, a larger share of brain than our noble selves. On the other hand, however, man carries (absolutely) more weight in his cranium than any other breathing creature except the elephant and the whale. As a rule, the human brain increases in gravity-specific gravity, we mean, of course—up to the twentieth or twenty-first year, and from the "age of discretion" till the fortieth year usually remains in *statu quo*. After forty the organ, in most cases, begins to grow less. It continues to decrease in volume more rapidly as we grow older, and in those who are unhappy enough to reach the seventh stage of "second childishness and mere oblivion," there is nothing of it left worth mentioning. As a proof that the weight of the encephalic mass determines to a considerable extent the amount of intellectual power, it may be stated that when the former is less than thirty-two ounces—forty-nine ounces for the male and forty-four for the female brain is the average—idiocy or partial imbecility accompanies the defect. The heaviest brain on record is that of Cuvier, the great naturalist, which pulled down nearly sixty-four ounces.

THE DAYS OF THE WEEK.—In the Museum of Berlin, in the hall devoted to northern antiquities, they have the representations of the idols from whom the names of our days of the week are derived. They are given in the following manner: From the idol of Sun comes Sun-

day. This idol is represented with his face like the sun, holding a burning wheel with both hands on his breast, signifying his course around the world. The idol of the moon, from which comes Monday, is habited in a short coat, like a man, but holding a moon in his hand. Tuisco, from which comes Tuesday, was one of the most ancient and peculiar gods of the Germans, and is represented in his garment of skin, according to the peculiar manner of clothing. The third day of the week was dedicated to his worship. Woden, from whence comes Wednesday, was a valiant prince among the Saxons. His image was prayed to for victory. Thor, from whence we have Thursday, is seated on a bed, with twelve stars over his head, holding a sceptre in his right hand. Friga, from whence we have Friday, is represented with a drawn sword in his right hand and a bow in his left. He was the giver of peace and plenty. Seator, from whence is Saturday, has the appearance of perfect wretchedness; he is thin-visaged, long-haired, with a long beard. He carries a pail of water in his right hand, wherein are fruits and flowers.

CHIMNEYS.—In the year 1200, chimneys were scarcely known in England. One only was allowed in a religious house, one in a manor house, and one in a great hall of a castle or lord's house; but in other houses the smoke found its way out as it could. The writers of the fourteenth century seem to have considered them as the newest invention of luxury. In Henry VII's reign, the University of Oxford had no fire allowed; for it is mentioned that, after the students had supped, having no fire in winter, they were obliged to take a good run for half an hour to get heat in their feet before they retired for the night. Holinshed, in the reign of Elizabeth, describes the rudeness of the preceding generation in the arts of life. "There were," says he, "very few chimneys; even in the capital towns the fire was laid to the wall, and the smoke issued out of the door, roof, or window. The houses were wattle and plastered over with clay, and all the furniture and utensils were of wood." In the year 1639 a tax of two shillings was laid on chimneys.

THE EARTH COMING TO REST.—Is the motion of planetary bodies perpetual? At first everything seems to show that it is. The earth, which, with its mass of three thousand trillion tons, turns with a speed which enables a student to go bare-headed a good many miles without catching cold in the act of saluting a professor, for a long time defied all attempts to detect in it loss of speed; but with the friction of the tides continually at work such loss must take place, and now it is pretty certain, from the calculations of Adams, the astronomer, that the earth

loses about an hour in 180,000 years, and is coming to rest, though, it must be admitted, rather leisurely. So, also, the hurrying up of the comets as they go round the sun is possibly accounted for by a retarding action in space which makes it necessary for them to try and make up, as it were, for lost time; and, in fact, the general arguments in the present day are in favor of what Sir Isaac Newton believed—that the motions of all bodies in space are suffering retardation, and that their velocity is becoming less, and will ultimately cease.—*Nature*.

A FEW FACTS ABOUT THE BIBLE.

Verses in the Old Testament, 23,241.

Verses in the New Testament, 7,959.

The Books of the Old Testament, 39.

The Books of the New Testament, 27.

Words in the Old Testament, 59,430.

Letters in the New Testament, 181,253.

Chapters in the Old Testament, 629.

Letters in the Old Testament, 2,728,100.

Chapters in the New Testament, 260.

The word "Jehovah" occurs 6,885 times.

The middle Book of the Old Testament is Proverbs.

The middle chapter of the Old Testament is Job xxix.

The middle verse of the New Testament is Acts xxii. 17.

The shortest verse in the New Testament is John xi. 35.

The longest verse in the Old Testament is Esther viii. 9.

The middle Book of the New Testament is 2 Thessalonians.

The middle chapter and shortest in the Bible is Psalm cxvii.

OLD AGE.—A French convict was condemned at the age of eighteen years, in the year 1724, to suffer imprisonment for the term of 100 years. The convict served his time, was discharged, traveled on foot to Lyons, and laid claim to an estate that belonged to him, and in settlement thereof he received the sum of £4500. Among other interesting cases was that of Donald McDonald, who, at the age of 107 years, was sent to the House of Correction for disorderly conduct, and afterwards, at the age of 137, came to a premature death by falling down-stairs. Another case was mentioned of a Russian who lived to the great age of 168 years; he married for the third time at the age of 93, and lived in all the enjoyments of matrimonial bliss with this third wife for a period of fifty years! Another case was mentioned of a man who, at the age of 169, testified in court to an event that took place 140 years before!

RUTHVEN'S PUZZLE PAGE.

Send all communications for this Department to
EDWIN R. BRIGGS, West Bethel, Oxford
County, Maine.

Answers to June Puzzles.

79.—School-girl.

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| 80.—Companion. | 81.—Magistrate. |
| 82.—Permanent. | 83.—Cashier. |
| 84.—Society. | 85.—Galleries. |
| 86.—Contest. | 87.—Peculiar. |
| 88.—Likely. | 89.—Meaning. |
| 90.—Tenfold. | 91.—Probable. |
| 92.—V | |
| H E M | 93.—C A P E R |
| H O T E L | A L I V E |
| V E T E R A N | P I N E S |
| M E R I N O | E V E N T |
| L A N E S | R E S T S |
| N O S E | |

- 94.—Reap, rape, pare, pear.
95.—Marblehead. 96.—Violet.
97.—Pink. 98.—Pansy.
99.—Rose. 100.—"Little Women."

23.—Cross-Word Enigma.

In rapacious, not in hog;
In sagacious, not in dog;
In sebaceous, not in wax;
In veracious, not in facts;
In meracious, not in mix;
In tenacious, not in fix;
In cetaceous, not in whale;
In minacious, not in bale;
In dicacious, not in talk;
In vivacious, not in stalk.
The **W H O L E** is help, support or aid,
A charity of any grade
Bestowed on woman, man or maid.

MAUDE.

24.—A Diamond.

1 A letter. 2 A small cask or barrel. 3 False
show. 4 A spherical glass receiver. 5 A large
fowl. 6 The female of any species of deer. 7.
A letter. CORA A. L.

25.—A Pentagon.

1 A letter. 2 A pronoun. 3 Protects. 4
Physical. 5 To tell over. 6 A soft, shining
silk. 7 A kind of cotton gauze.

MARQUIS.

Decapitations.

- 26.—Behead an act of deception, and leave to
grow warm.
27.—A lash, and leave a part of the body.
28.—Idle talk, and leave value.
29.—Forward, and leave metal.
30.—To wander, and leave a waiter.
31.—To state anew, and leave property.

AMY GRAVES.

Connected Diamonds.

- 32.—1 A Roman numeral. 2 A pony. 3 In-
human. 4 A Reckoner. 5 An instrument to
break open doors. 6 A field. 7 A consonant.
33.—A Roman numeral. 2 An exclamation.
3 Separately. 4 Fascinated. 5 Fortified. 6
To spread new hay. 7 A consonant.

The central words of the two diamonds, con-
nected, mean disenchanting. CYRIL DEANE.

Word Anagrams.

- 34.—Strive to amend.
35.—Rise our food.
36.—Grieve to train.
37.—Curled in paper.
38.—Coal in a mat.

DINAH.

39.—Double Letter Enigma.

In "home, sweet home";
In "State-house dome";
In "poultry yard";
In "Spanish guard";
In "pretty girls,"
With golden curls.
When a very small lad
I spent many **ENTIRE**
Roaming through the woods,
And gathering sweet briar.

MARQUIS.

Curtailments.

- 40.—Curtail a surgical instrument, and leave
the swallow.
41.—To peddle, and leave the berry of the
hawthorn.
42.—To threaten, and leave to enclose.
43.—An astringent vegetable extract, and
leave relatives.
44.—A scoundrel, and leave to decline.
45.—Deluded, and leave small rain.

CYRIL DEANE.

Answers in two Months.

Prizes.

For the first complete, or largest list of correct
answers to this month's puzzles, received before
August 10th, we offer an illustrated novelette;
and for the next best list, a small book of beau-
tiful poems.

Solvers.

Answers to the April puzzles were received
from Geraldine, Tri Angle, Ida May, Teddy,
Cyril Deane, Vinnie, J. D. L., Birdie Browne,
Eulalie, Black Hawk, Cora A. L., Ann Eliza,
Kitty Connor, Bert Rand, Nicholas, Tom, Good
Hugh, Katie Smith, Willie L., Birdie Lane,
Jack and Annie Kirkpatrick.

Prize-Winners.

Tri Angle, Toledo, Ohio, for the largest list of
answers. Nicholas, Chicago, Ill., for the next
best list.

EDITOR'S DRAWER.

THINGS PLEASANT AND OTHERWISE.

THE WASHERWOMAN'S SONG.

Wring out the old, wring out the new,
Wring out the black, wring out the gray,
Wring out the white, wring out the blue—
And thus I wring my life away.

An occupation strange is mine;
At least, it seems to people droll
That, while I'm working at the line,
I'm going, too, from pole to pole.

Where'er I go I strive to please;
From morn till night I rub and rub.
I'm something like Diogenes—
I almost live within a tub.

To acrobats who vault and spring
In circuses, I take a shine;
They make their living in the ring,
And by the wringer I make mine.

My calling's humble, I'll agree,
But I am no cheap calico,
As some folks are who stare at me;
I'm something that will wash, you know.

I smile in calm, I strive in storm,
With life's difficulties cope;
My duties cheerfully perform;
My motto, While there's life there's soap.

Wring out the old, wring out the new,
Wring out the black, wring out the gray,
Wring out the white, wring out the blue—
And thus I wring my life away.

—Once a Week.

THE MISFORTUNES OF A METHODICAL MAN.

It was my misfortune in early life to be in constant companionship with one who never tired of discoursing upon the benefits accruing from systematic method in all matters, great and small, and whose constant aim it was to pour into my receptive mind such proverbial nutriment as is contained in the old saws, "A place for everything and everything in its place"; "My boy, be cool, do things by rule, and then you'll do them well"; and "Order is heaven's first law."

The result was that by the time I had reached man's estate I was considered by my family a pattern of neatness and a synonym for order, and by friends and acquaintances an old maid or an old bach—these two appellations being considered equally pertinent, notwithstanding their irreconcilability from a sexual point of view, and not infrequently I had the satisfaction of hearing myself referred to as a "crank," the characterization usually being prefaced by an adjective which was calculated to make the term

quite the reverse of complimentary, even had there been any doubt, in the absence of the qualifying word, as to the estimate in which my peculiarities were held by the speaker.

But the obloquy that has thus been heaped upon me is the smallest of my troubles; for I am fully aware that had my idiosyncrasies taken an opposite direction and led me into riotous disorder, I should have been criticised quite as severely upon my lack of method as I have been for being a slave to order. The misfortunes of which I shall speak are of a practical rather than of a theoretical variety; more often physical than mental, objective rather than subjective.

It has been my habit, then, to preserve whatever came in my way which could ever be of possible use, and to lay it away, properly ticketed, where it could be got at, without loss of time, at the needful moment. Consequently I have scrapbooks beyond enumeration filled to the covers with recondite information, all properly indexed; and I have shelves and boxes and trunks charged with tools, instruments, and all sorts of knick-knackery, everything being so orderly disposed as to be at hand upon emergency. And what has been the outcome? I am so lumbered with my impedimenta that not only have I been to inconceivable cost as to time and labor, but I have also expended fabulous sums of money upon my collections, which are an ever-increasing cause of outlay in care, storage and removal. True, the occasion for using the treasured scrap or the cherished object has come again and again, but it has almost invariably been some other person who has profited by my thoughtfulness; some careless, happy-go-lucky individual, who toiled not, neither did he spin, but Solomon in all his glory was not a raid to be mentioned in connection with that which this inconsiderate person made upon my hoardings. I was the ant which laid up food for the long winter of necessity, and he the grasshopper who, after singing and dancing through the summer, came when summer was ended and ate of my bounty as thoughtlessly and as carelessly as he sung and danced the happy hours away, while I was tolling and molling, and cheating myself out of recreation, and denying myself the smallest pleasure.

But there is the comfort, albeit not unaccompanied with vexation, that in this matter, at least, my bump of order has been of use to others, if not to myself. In other directions I have not even this small satisfaction. Let me descend to meaner things for illustrations. It has ever been my custom to shift my boots daily,

the shoe which yesterday covered my right foot being to-day upon my sinister extremity, while my left foot finds lodgment in the boot which yesterday inclosed its dexter fellow. Now it oftentimes happens that my footgear is disturbed—sometimes maliciously, I fear—and nobody without an orderly mind can imagine how much sleep I have lost in my efforts to discover to which foot each shoe respectively belonged according to regular succession. And it should be remembered, otherwise my torture can be but dimly appreciated, that once I had lost my reckoning it could never again be righted, and so long as that pair of boots lasted I was in a state of continual torment through fear that those boots were receiving unfair treatment; and though some persons might suggest that although one boot was overworked by service on the right foot, its fellow was being as hardly treated in an opposite direction, and that therefore no real injustice was done to either, I must say that I could never extract any comfort from such a thought, even had I been so untrue to myself as to entertain it.

So with my linen. My shirts, my stockings and my pocket handkerchiefs I always arrange in regular strata, which I ever build up from the base, and from which I invariably supply myself from the top. And then I have my days for clean collars and shirts, and those days are religiously observed, spite of all accidents, incidents or discouragements. I would no sooner think of making a change on any other day than I would think of jumping into a horse-pond in my Sunday suit; and oftentimes I have worn a collar soiled with the splatterings of the muddy streets, or a shirt which has partaken of the soup which had been intended for my stomach, simply because the allotted time for renewal had not come; for I never have been able to break from my methodical habits, though the dirty linen must be paraded at the opera, or confess itself frankly in the drawing-room.

In short, the demon of Order has ruled me as with a rod of iron, and all my actions have been forced to submit. I am never happy unless I can go to bed at my appointed time, and get up at the allotted moment; and my meals must inevitably be partaken of at the fixed time, and my food must never vary from the regimen that I have prescribed. I have degenerated into an automaton, a mere machine, and death alone shall release me from the thralldom of Order, which, like the Old Man of the Sea, has its legs about my neck, and rides me pig-back wheresoever it will, without power of resistance on the part of its hapless victim.

Oh, what would I not give for one moment's freedom—for the power and the will to pass but one instant of time in reckless abandon, and unchecked disorder!

But it may not be. I am the slave of Order;

such have I lived, and so must I die.—*Boston Transcript.*

Parson Allen, of D., was quite a wag, as well as a peculiarly interesting preacher. He was often called upon to perform the marriage ceremony, and his peculiarities on such occasions often furnished a supply of merriment long after the parties had retired from the parsonage.

On one occasion, after the marriage knot had been tied, the bridegroom, supposing that the parson was entitled by law to a certain fee, and would therefore return the change, handed the minister a ten-dollar bill, which was carefully folded and placed in his pocket. The old parson, having noticed the X in the corner of the old State bank-note, kept up his lively conversation commenting upon the ups and downs of life, till the groom became somewhat nervous over the delay in relation to his change, and he ventured to say:—

"Parson Allen, that was a ten-dollar bill I gave you."

"Yes, so I perceive; you are very generous. It is not often that I receive so large a fee. A comfortable thing it is to have a bank-note in one's pocket." And then he gave some amusing illustrations of selfishness, and another ten minutes of precious time was consumed.

Again the groom ventured to remind the parson that he had not returned the change he expected, and he hesitatingly suggested:—

"Perhaps you did not think that the bill I handed you for your services was a ten; did you, Parson Allen?"

"Oh yes, I noticed that it was; and I assure you that I have not been so agreeably surprised for a long time. I always think on such occasions that the husband has an appreciative regard for his worthy partner, and I presume that you regard your wife, that now is, worth at least ten dollars; and I doubt if you would have the knot untied for twice that amount; would you, Mr. N.?"

"Not I," said the nonplussed groom. "But is there not a regular fee which the minister is allowed to take for marrying folks?"

"Not that I am aware of," said the parson. "We always leave the fee to be fixed upon by the parties who get married."

There was an old couple at the Third-street depot the other day who had been to Niagara Falls, and were waiting for a train to their home in the interior of the State. They just felt that they had accomplished a big thing, and were consequently quite elated. They had scarcely taken seats in the waiting-room before the old man turned to a stranger, and said:—

"We've just got back from Niagry Falls. Powerful sight, them Falls are. Hain't nuthin' like them Falls in this hull country."

"Never heard of 'em," gruffly replied the man.

"You didn't? Lor' bless me, but that's astonishing! Never heard of Niagry Falls?"

"Neeer. What is it, anyhow?"

"Why, it's the biggest lot of water you ever saw, falling over the awfulest precipice you ever heard of. Why, it makes folks shiver to look at it."

"Singular that none of the papers have ever mentioned it."

"They haven't? Why, them Falls have been there for thousands of years."

"Wasn't it a freshet or a dam broke loose, or something of that sort?"

"No, siree! That water keeps a-pouring and roaring and humming all the time."

"Must have been some trick about it," carelessly observed the cynic. "If it was a real thing there'd be some excitement about it. You don't drink?"

"Me drink? I've never drunk a drop in my life?"

"Well, it's too bad. Anyone who will swindle an old man like you ought to be horse-whipped."

"Swindled? Do you pertend there hain't no Niagry Falls?"

"Never heard of any such thing," replied the man as he got up and left.

"Say, Hanner," said the old man, as he turned to his wife after a while, "did you hear that?"

"Every word."

"Say, when we git home we'll keep mum until I see Stebbins, and feel around and see if there is a Niagry Falls. If we've been fooled we don't want to be luffed at; if it's all right, we kin do our blowing when it's safe and will count. Don't say Goat Island, nor Horse Shoe Falls, nor Bridal Veil to no living soul until we find out whether that ginger ale flew to our heads; for the show was all right, and wuth the money."

Those whose evening reveries are often disturbed by the feline tribe, will appreciate the following:—

"If a cat doth meet a cat, oh! need they both to squall? Every Tommy has his Tabby, waiting on the wall; and yet she welcomes his approach by an unearthly yawl. If a kit doth wish to court a cat upon the wall, why don't he sweetly sit and smile, and not stand up and bawl; and lift his precious back up high, and show his teeth and moan, as if 'twere colic more than love that made the feller groan. Among the train there is a swain, his voice is known full well; but what's his name or whence he came, the deuce alone can tell. He's sweet upon the other sex, his ardent passions rise; he can't re-

sist the tender glance of their seductive eyes—and so with groans and horrid threats he reads the evening air, and makes these midnight 'cat-erwauls' impossible to bear."

"Is there a very great demand nowadays for the common wire hairpin?" queried the writer of a Broadway dealer in fancy goods.

"There is always some demand for the useful little article," replied the dealer, "but the present style of hair-dressing, which dispenses with the use of the wire pin, and the advent of those large ornamental pins, now so popular with the ladies, has tended to lower the demand for the more common articles considerably. I manage, however, to sell a ton of cheap hairpins every year."

"What becomes of all the hairpins?"

"I fear you will have to ask Madam Diss De Bar for the solution of that conundrum. It is one of those questions which, like the Sphinx's riddle, is likely to remain unanswered for all time. I can only suggest that perhaps the hairpin goes the way of old bustles, buttons, ribbons, and other discarded articles of feminine adornment. If it were not for the innumerable uses to which a woman can put the simple little hairpin, it would have vanished into history along with the high comb and hoopskirt. I don't believe there is any tool which the average woman can manipulate with such consummate skill and dainty deftness as the hairpin. With a hammer or sharp-edged tool, such as the chisel, a woman succeeds in doing little more than bruising her fair fingers; but place a hairpin in her hands, and watch the wonders she performs. One who had never before seen a hairpin in the hands of a woman would never imagine that so many devices lay hidden within so small a bit of metal.

"With a hairpin a woman opens envelopes, fastens her dress, suspends a calendar or picture on the wall, picks her teeth, and cuts apart the leaves of her magazine or book. It becomes, on occasion, an improvised nut-pick, or shoe and glove-buttoner; or is as swiftly transformed into a hook, scoop, or crank. Nor is this a complete catalogue of the manifold uses of the modest hairpin. Necessity is the mother of invention, and so the hairpin becomes the tool of the moment for whatever purposes the fair mechanic wills."

"Then you believe that the hairpin has come to stay?"

"I think it has, or at least it will remain until manual training forms a part of the education of our girls in the schools and colleges. You may rest assured, however, that the hairpin will receive the attention of at least one more generation of women."

THE PICNIC.



ROMANCE.



REALITY.



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OLD MOGGS.

A STORY OF CALIFORNIA LIFE.

BY JOHN CLERKE.

OLD Moggs was dying; so his physicians said, so he believed, so his relatives hoped,—those relatives, I mean, who stood by his bedside to minister to his wants, and close his dying eyes. As for his son, poor boy, if he had any premonition of his father's approaching dissolution, I have no doubt he would have been profoundly grieved; but he was far away, and knew nothing about it.

Old Moggs was a long time in dying. Some people are so provokingly tenacious of life, when their dear relatives are altogether willing and ready to give them most respectful and respectable sepulture, and erect elegant monuments to their remains. I have known rich old uncles and aunts and grandfathers, and even fathers and mothers, to linger on and on, year after year,—and seeming to enjoy it, too,—utterly regardless of the wishes and feelings of their needy and utterly exasperated heirs.

They have a custom among the Indians on the Oregon coast which I have thought might be introduced among the Christians, to the great relief and advantage of heirs expectant, and those burdened with the support of infirm old parents and grandparents. Whenever one of these interesting "wards of the government" becomes so aged and infirm that he cannot spear a salmon, paddle a canoe, or gather wapatos and salaberries, his son or nephew or son-in-law, or whoever else chance to have the greatest interest in his welfare, leads him kindly forth to a retired spot on the beach, knocks him on the head with a club, and buries him in the sand; and thus the old party drops quietly

out of existence. You see the advantage of such a proceeding. It is quiet and inexpensive, no gathering of the *tillacums*, nor parade of canoes, nor beating of tomtoms, nor howling of hired squaws, nor decorating the grave with carved and painted images, and old cloths, and canoes, and pots and pans and kettles with holes knocked through them, that they may not tempt the cupidity of the living. All the ceremonies, which are *de rigueur* when a *siwash* is cut off in the prime and vigor of manhood, are very properly dispensed with in the case of one who perversely persists in living after his death becomes desirable:

But Moggs's tardiness in making his final exit (I use this phrase in preference to another because he had been an actor in his youth) was rather favorable than otherwise to the designs of his wife and her sister. They hoped, as I have said, that he was dying; nevertheless, they earnestly desired that he should not die until he had made a will, and one which should be in accordance with their wishes. They had not yet got him to consent to the execution of such a document; but they confidently expected to, and with some reason; for when two crafty and unscrupulous women get sole charge of an enfeebled, dying old man, they can usually mould him to their will.

Old Moggs was one of the largest proprietors and manager of the Blunderbore quartz mill and mine of Big-Bear canyon, two miles west-northwest of the flourishing town of Fossilburg. When he took the management of the property it was barely paying expenses; but under his shrewd and energetic

management it soon began to yield fair dividends, and at length to return a very large income, so that it was considered the most valuable concern in that section of the State; and Moggs, as his income steadily and largely increased, began to be regarded as the most important man in Fossilburg, of which he was claimed as a citizen, although he spent most of his time at the mine and mill. When he first came to the Blunderbore he was a widower with one son, a sprightly lad of sixteen, whom he allowed to do pretty much as he pleased,—probably because he found that similar independence agreed very well with himself. He seemed to rejoice in his widowerhood, and to have no disposition to lay it aside,—even had the opportunities for so doing been more plentiful and tempting than they were.

About the time old Moggs took charge of the Blunderbore, the Mergles family, fresh from "the States," took the old wayside tavern, known as the "Travelers' Rest," in Snail Hollow, about half a dozen miles below Fossilburg, on the Sacramento road. The family consisted of Mr. Mergles, a meek and inoffensive elderly gentleman; Mrs. Mergles, an active, loud-voiced, bustling, boasting woman, who evidently wore the "unwhisperables"; Miss Sophronia Mergles, the elder daughter, who to years of discretion added all her mother's talent and energy; and Miss Euphemia Mergles, the youngest daughter, who, though but seventeen years of age, was declared by her mother and sister (and she did not attempt to deny it) to be a marvel of feminine accomplishments. She wrote such a beautiful hand! she had taken dancing lesson from a real French master! she could play the piano! she had studied French two quarters! Such a startling catalogue of gifts and graces might well be expected to strike consternation into the hearts of all spinsters in that wild mining region, and bring all eligible young men to her feet. Sophronia herself, though slightly *passe*, was conscious of a great degree of superiority. Indeed, the Mergleses had been "somebody" in their time, though now reduced to the necessity of serving scant fare with a profusion of gentility to such wayfarers as chance might direct to their place of entertainment. Mergles had been a justice of the peace in his former place of residence, and had even been "up for" the Legislature; and Mrs. Mergles confessed to a connection by mar-

riage with a governor, and a judge, and a general of militia.

With these advantages and this prestige the Mergles girls could hardly fail to form excellent matrimonial alliances. There were only two difficulties in the way; handsome and really accomplished girls, though by no means plenty, were yet to be found in Fossilburg; and, while Sophronia Mergles was decidedly plain, Euphemia was as ugly as sin,—yes, as original sin. She had the features and complexion, and the form and stature, of a Chinawoman, and an uncommonly ill-favored one at that. The girls were, however, both of the gushing sort; and if either of them could get a young man to look upon her without fear of sudden blindness, she would inevitably make some impression upon him. But, much to the surprise of their fond mother and themselves, it was long before they had an opportunity to employ their blandishments to any purpose.

At length, much to everybody's surprise, Sophronia succeeded in attracting the attention of old Moggs, and in due course of time, by dexterous management, married him. How she accomplished it, I do not pretend to know; I only state the fact. She was a very clever woman, and there was nothing but her plainness in the way of her ensnaring a much handsomer if not richer prize; for old Moggs was himself exceedingly plain, and his nose was ornamented with a very well developed blossom. I suppose it was his own want of beauty that made him overlook his wife's personal defects. As for her, she cared nothing whatever for him, but a great deal for his money. That was her own declaration, as I have it from the most unquestionable authority. Mrs. Moggs made the remark to Mrs. Brown, who reported it to Mrs. Smith, who repeated it to Mrs. Jones, who related it to Mrs. Robinson, who told it to Mrs. Thompson, who confided it to her husband, who communicated it to me. That's pretty direct evidence, I take it.

It was on his wedding night that old Moggs was smitten with the disease of which the physicians now said he was dying. They called it leprosy. He was swollen all over, and his skin was of a livid hue, while the natural uncomeliness of his features was very much heightened by their puffiness and strange discoloration. He was not, however, prostrated at once. He kept around on his feet in a slow, painful way for some time, and would not keep his bed until

compelled to by the steady progress of the disease. There was a comfortable house adjoining the mill which he caused to be suitably furnished, and into it he removed with his wife and son. In justice to Mrs. Moggs, I must say that she nursed her invalid spouse with great care and attention, inasmuch that he regarded himself as exceedingly fortunate in having secured such a treasure, and he gradually yielded to the influence which she began insensibly to exert over him. It was not, however, until he became bedridden that she ventured to assert a positive authority. Then she began to persecute her step-son, Albert, in such a manner that the poor boy had not a moment's peace under his father's roof; and yet she did it in such a quiet way that when he went to lay his grievances before his father he was unable to specify an act of hers of sufficient gravity to warrant his complaint. By degrees she made his home so intolerable to him that Albert was constrained to leave it, and cast himself upon the mercy of the wide, wide world; which gave his stepmother an excellent opportunity to expatiate to her husband upon the ingratitude of that boy, whom she had taken so much pains to instruct, guide, and direct, and for whose comfort she had cared with as tender solicitude, as if he had been her own son. And old Moggs believed her. He thought that a woman who was so tenderly attentive to his wants would not neglect his offspring. Yet he did not harden his heart against Albert, who, I may as well record here as elsewhere, made his way to San Francisco, and, having inherited his father's histrionic propensities, joined a theatrical company, in which his native genius raised him to such distinction that he was soon intrusted with such *roles* as second soldier in tragedy, third villager in comedy, and fourth demon in spectacular pieces; in all of which he acquitted himself to his own satisfaction, and, so far as could be ascertained, to that of the public also.

Having got Albert out of the way, Mrs. Moggs's next step was to take Euphemia into her household, partly to assist her in nursing her husband, by which means she hoped to increase her own influence over him, and partly in order that, by virtue of the social position she had gained through her husband's wealth, she might further her sister's laudable desire to form a suitable matrimonial alliance. In her first object

she seemed to succeed tolerably well. Euphemia played the part of nurse so well that old Moggs often expressed his sense of gratitude to her, and to his wife for enlisting her services. But her irretrievable ugliness, which no amount of dressing or jewelry could mitigate, was an almost insuperable obstacle in the way of the second scheme. No young man with the slightest appreciation of feminine beauty could be induced to offer Miss Mergles any but the most ordinary attentions. At last, in sheer desperation, the two sisters, acting upon the adage that "half a loaf is better than no bread," concentrated their combined fascinations upon Samuel Pillkins, and after a series of remarkably skillful *mauvœuvres* succeeded in attaching him to Miss Euphemia as her accepted lover.

Sam, of himself, was anything but a desirable match for even so neglected a damsel as Miss Mergles. He was unprepossessing in person, and trifling in character; and though he professed the law, he lacked both disposition and opportunity to practice it to an remunerative extent. But his father had money and property which would eventually descend to Sam; so that if present provision could be made for the young people they might marry at once, and safely trust to the future. Having revolved the matter in her mind, Mrs. Moggs—whose talent for diplomacy would have rendered her invaluable in a European court half a century ago—resolved to bring old Pillkins to a sense of his duty to give the young couple a fair start in life. She found him tolerably tractable; and when she represented to him that old Moggs, who was rapidly declining, and could not possibly last long, would undoubtedly remember Euphemia in his will, he assured her that he would do what was necessary on his part. He had a great deal of gallantry, with very little taste; and so long as Sam was satisfied with Euphemia he could see no objection to her.

Old Pillkins was a very energetic man, and pushed business in several different directions at the same time. Among other things, he was a partner with a young man named Robert Deveridge in a branch of the mining trade which involved the manufacture of hydraulic pipe, hose, and so forth, and dealing in force and lifting pumps, and other machinery. Deveridge managed the business, and kept the books, though Pillkins frequently collected outstanding ac-

counts. He had originally gone into business at Deveridge's solicitation,—the young man lacking capital to start in fairly himself,—and it had proven quite profitable. But Pillkins, although occasionally moved by generous impulses, was what business men call "tricky;" he would cheat his best friend, or his own brother, without the slightest compunction, and venture on the very verge of criminality in order to obtain a pecuniary advantage. In casting about for an opening for Sam, it occurred to him that he might, by a little management, get rid of Deveridge at a cheap rate, and place his son in charge of the store and shop; and, having formed his plan of operation, he immediately set about its execution.

Giving out that he was going to San Francisco, he quietly made a tour through the upper mining towns and camps to which the trade of Pillkins & Deveridge extended, after which he actually visited San Francisco, and returned to Fossilburg after an absence of about three weeks. He met his partner with great cordiality, and for two or three days spent more time in the store than had been his wont, several times remaining in charge during Deveridge's temporary absence; the last time being late one evening, when his partner had, at his suggestion, gone to visit the superintendent of certain extensive hydraulic works, with the view of obtaining a contract for laying pipes. Early on the following morning Pillkins entered the store, and remarked carelessly:—

"Bob, suppose we look over the books, and see how this business is running. It seems to me that this concern has not been doing well of late. If any money has come in, I have not seen the color of it."

"It is the dull season, now," replied Deveridge. "For several weeks I have taken in barely enough to pay expenses. But we shall do better next month. I have several large orders to fill, for which I expect cash. The books are here at the desk; look over them at your leisure."

On going to the desk, however, it was found that the cash-book and journal were missing. A strict search was instituted, in which Pillkins assisted with much apparent zeal; but they were not discovered. The men in the shop were questioned, but knew nothing of them; the boy who opened and swept the store and shop in the morning was summoned, but could give no account of them. Deveridge was troubled. Pillkins

took up the ledger, and after examining it for a short time, said:—

"I see you have not posted the books, lately, Bob."

"No," said Deveridge. "I have had other matters on my hands, and have neglected that for two or three weeks past."

"Humph!" said Pillkins; "there is some mystery about this affair. Those books are of no value to any one but you and me, Bob, and you have had charge of them. You must hunt them up."

"I shall do my best to find them," said Deveridge.

Pillkins left abruptly. About noon he returned.

"Have you found those books yet, Bob?" he inquired.

"No," replied Deveridge.

Pillkins turned on his heel, and walked off whistling. He returned again in the evening.

"Bob," said he, "you had better produce those books. I am a little too old to be humbugged in this way; and you ought to know better than to try it."

"What do you mean, Mr. Pillkins?" asked Deveridge, in amazement.

"I mean just this," replied Pillkins. "You have secreted those books for reasons and purposes of your own. You don't wish me to see them; but I must see them, and I will see them. Mark that."

"Mr. Pillkins," said Deveridge, "you have no right to make such an accusation. I have equal, and even better, grounds for charging you with having abstracted the books. You have had the opportunity, and may have had reasons for doing so; though I cannot conceive what advantage either of us could gain from secreting them."

"Humph!" said Pillkins; "that's the key you sing in, is it? Very well, young man; I tell you you had better produce the books."

And again he walked away, as abruptly as he had come, in a state of apparent great indignation.

Deveridge, who was a quiet, unassuming young man, with little rude experience of the world, was terribly annoyed; the more so when he learned that Pillkins was circulating throughout Fossilburg the charge against him of having secreted the books for dishonest purposes. The conviction gradually forced itself upon his mind that Pillkins meant him mischief,—though in what man-

ner he could not guess. He was to be enlightened, however.

In the morning Pillkins again visited him.

"Bob," said he, in a conciliatory tone, "we've been good friends, and never had any difficulty in our business before, and I don't wish to have any quarrel now; but I think it is best that we should dissolve partnership. We can do it very quickly and fairly. We are equal partners. You may name a sum that you are willing to give for my interest or take for your own; or, if you prefer it, I will make the offer. What do you say?"

"I am agreed," said Deveridge, after a few moments' consideration. "I leave it with you to make the offer."

"Very well," said Pillkins; "you agree to accept the sum I name, or to give it?"

"I do," said Deveridge.

"I propose, then," said Pillkins, "to give you two thousand dollars for your interest, or to take that amount for mine."

"Why!" said Deveridge, "the building, stock, and outstanding accounts are worth not less than ten thousand dollars. You do not offer half enough."

"I offer you what I am willing to take," replied Pillkins. "The building and stock appear to be making nothing, and as for the accounts, a great many of them are worthless. You have been very careless in giving credits, and taking the accounts as they run, it will cost their face to collect them. Jones, of Black Ridge, who owed us six hundred dollars, has sold out and gone to the States. Barry & Co., of Sports' Delight, are doing nothing—absolutely bankrupt. Emery, of Foster's Flat, and Jenkins, of Sharpsville, will never pay a cent on the dollar. I have had certain information about these parties, and what I state you may depend upon. Well, will you give or take? Shall I write you a check, or will you write me one?"

Pillkins knew that Deveridge had no ready money. He had borrowed a part of the capital with which he commenced business; and repaying that, making some remittances to his mother, and maintaining himself economically, had exhausted every dollar he had drawn from the concern as his share of the profits. And Pillkins thought that the precaution he had taken to represent the young man's dishonesty, and the loss of money by the firm, taken in connection with the fact that money was exceed-

ingly scarce in Fossilburg just then, would prevent his partner from obtaining, at short notice, such an amount as two thousand dollars. These were the considerations that induced him to name so small a sum; and the more he thought about it the more he was sorry he had not named fifteen hundred dollars, as he felt certain that Deveridge would have been driven to accept even that sum.

"How about the accounts?" asked Deveridge.

"The purchaser shall take the accounts just as they stand in the books," answered Pillkins.

"I mean," said Deveridge, "our personal accounts; our liabilities to the firm, or its indebtedness to us severally."

"Everything goes," said Pillkins. "The purchase and sale wipes out everything between you and me up to this date, so far as it appears on the books. If there is anything behind the books—that is, if you have received money that you have not entered—you must account for it."

"When is the money to be paid?" asked Deveridge.

"Immediately," replied Pillkins; "that is, before six o'clock this evening."

"Very well," said Deveridge. "I will take your interest for the sum and on the conditions named."

Pillkins was astonished. "Have you the money to pay down?" he asked.

"No," said Deveridge; "but I will try to get it."

"Remember," said Pillkins, "it must be paid by six o'clock."

"I understand that," replied Deveridge.

"And if you fail to pay it by that time," continued Pillkins, "I take the property at the same price."

"Certainly," said Deveridge.

"Now I want no backing out of this bargain," said Pillkins, whose confidence that he would yet be the purchaser was unabated. "I will draw up an agreement, specifying all the conditions of our bargain, which we will sign in the presence of witnesses."

"Very good," said Deveridge.

The agreement was duly drawn up, witnessed, and deposited in the hands of a third party. Then Deveridge, with many misgivings, started out in quest of funds.

He had a friend named Holstein, a lawyer in good practice and of excellent standing, and to him he thought best to apply for

advice and direction. Having laid the whole matter before him, Holstein asked:—

"Has Pillkins made any return of his collections in the mountains two weeks ago?"

"No," said Deveridge. "I did not know he had been in the mountains lately. He was in San Francisco two weeks ago."

"Before he went to San Francisco," said Holstein, "he made a tour through the upper mining towns and camps—Sharpsville, Sports' Delight, Black Ridge, Bunkum Hollow, Foster's Flat, Poverty Gulch, and other places—and collected money from Barry & Co., Jones, Jenkins, Emery, and others, to the amount of over two thousand dollars. The way I happen to know it is this: John Wentworth, the deputy sheriff was through there at the same time, serving summonses on grand and petit jurors; and he and Pillkins traveled together, and had a very jovial time, John tells me. And you tell me there is no entry of these collections on your books?"

"I don't know about that," replied Deveridge. "Since Pillkins's return, my cash-book and journal have been missing. I am inclined to think they are in his possession; and from the terms of our bargain, as proposed by himself, I am inclined to think he has made the entries with his own hand."

"Ah, yes! I had forgotten the missing books. Richard," said Holstein, opening the door to another apartment, and addressing his clerk, "come here a moment. You remarked yesterday, when Gaylord and I were speaking of Pillkins & Deveridge's books, that Sam Pillkins had them. Did you know that, or only guess at it?"

"Well, sir," replied Richard, "it was only a guess; but I am pretty sure I was right."

"Why so?" asked Holstein.

"Well, sir," answered Richard, "the way of it is just this: As I understand it, the books were missed yesterday morning. Well, night before last, as I was going up Nugget Street, I overtook Sam Pillkins walking along, and he had two books under his arm that looked like account books."

"Sam," says I, 'what are you going to do with them books?'

"I'm going into business, Dick," says he, 'and I've commenced keeping the books already.'

"What business are you going into?" says I.

"I can't tell you about it yet," says he,

'only it will be Pillkins & Son, instead of Pillkins & Somebody Else.'

"That's all we talked about it."

"That's plain enough," said Holstein. "Do you know where Sam Pillkins's room is, Richard?"

"Yes, sir."

"Can you get access to it in his absence?"

"I think I can manage it, sir."

"Well, go and get those books. Break no locks, if you can help it, but get the books at all hazards, and bring them here, and I will give you a ten-dollar-piece, and stand between you and all harm. Be as quick as you can."

"Yes, sir," said Richard; and he started forthwith.

"The regular way of proceeding," said Holstein, "would be to produce a search-warrant; but that would take too much time; and, besides, I want to show the Pillkinses a little sharp practice. The old man, especially, will appreciate it."

Richard returned in due time with the missing books. On opening the journal, a paper fell out, which proved to be a memorandum, dated on the previous day, and signed by old Pillkins, directing Sam to enter immediately in the journal and cash-book certain specified collections made by the former, amounting to nineteen hundred and sixty-three dollars and fifty cents.

"So far so good," said Holstein. "Now I happen to have by me here two hundred dollars; take it, and induce Pillkins to receipt for it as part of the purchase money, subject to the conditions of your agreement. I think he will not object. The time is growing so short that he will think you can raise no more. After securing his receipt, which must specify distinctly the object of the payment, invite him to meet you here at my office, at five o'clock, to close the transaction. I will have everything in readiness."

Deveridge carried out his instructions successfully. Pillkins readily took the money, expecting to return it again within a few hours, and signed the receipt, which was drawn in such a manner as to afford a strong additional evidence, if any were needed, of the contract between him and Deveridge. At five o'clock, punctually, he appeared in Holstein's office, prepared with the coin to pay for the property, which he did not for a moment doubt would be his. The gentle

man who had the custody of the original contract was also present, with Deveridge and Holstein.

"Well, Bob," said old Pillkins, with a satisfied smirk, "I suppose you have that eighteen hundred dollars for me?"

"I have not," said Deveridge, quietly.

"Aha! I thought so," said Pillkins, grinning. "I have twenty-two hundred here, at your service. But there is no hurry; it is nearly an hour to six, and maybe some one will come along, and make you a present of the money."

"We do not need it," said Mr. Holstein, taking up the conversation on the part of Deveridge. "The contract here calls for two thousand dollars; we have paid you two hundred, and we find that you have collected and not accounted for nineteen hundred and sixty-three dollars and fifty cents. You owe us just one hundred and sixty-three dollars and fifty cents. You will please pay us this difference, and sign this deed and this bill of sale which I have prepared."

"You have got the amount of my collections, Mr. Holstein," said Pillkins, "with surprising accuracy. How you obtained your information, I don't know or care. But you have made one slight mistake; the different items making the aggregate amount you name were all entered in the books of the firm twenty-four hours ago; and by the terms of the contract the whole sum belongs to me, whether I am the purchaser of the property, or Mr. Deveridge."

"Mr. Deveridge," said Holstein, "when Mr. Pillkins requested you to produce those books you obstinately refused to do so. I trust you will be more obliging when the request comes from me."

Deveridge took the books from the top of a desk, and laid them upon the lawyer's table.

"How the deuce did you get them?" inquired Pillkins, in great surprise.

"That is not the question at present," said Holstein, coolly. "Be good enough to examine them, Mr. Pillkins. You will find that the mistake is with you."

Pillkins took the books and hastily turned them over; his countenance fell.

"Sold, by the living jingo!" he exclaimed. "Beaten at my own game, and by my own son, too!"

Finding himself ensnared, Pillkins, with a very bad grace, made the best of it, and amid fearful imprecations upon his stupid

offspring, signed the papers which put Deveridge in sole possession of the property.

Just as the business was concluded, Sam, who had been seeking his father and finally traced him to Holstein's office, entered in haste and trepidation.

"O father!" he exclaimed, in a voice expressive of anguish and disappointment, and unheeding the presence of others, "it's all up down there!"

"And it's all up here, too, thanks to your blundering, you infernal blockhead!" exclaimed old Pillkins, seizing his cane and raising it threateningly. "Get out of my sight, you idiot, or I'll break every bone in your body!"

For a moment the youth stood paralyzed by this unexpected reception; then the old man made a rush at him, and Sam fled precipitately, followed by his enraged parent in hot pursuit.

For the explanation of Sam's pathetic revelation, which his father received with so little sympathy, we must return to the bedside of old Moggs. The very day that Pillkins set out upon his collection tour, which resulted so disastrously for him, old Moggs's physicians informed him, his wife being present, that their utmost skill was of no avail; that his disease was slowly but steadily encroaching upon his vitals, and would inevitably bring him to the grave; perhaps in a few days—inevitably in a few short weeks.

Old Moggs received the announcement calmly; his wife manifested enough distress for a large family. She did not, however, after the first outburst, abandon herself altogether to grief. The time she had expected, the time for which she had assiduously prepared had come at last, and she could not afford to waste the precious moments in idle lamentations.

She had, from the commencement of old Moggs's illness, a premonition that it would be fatal; and she had also from the first formed a determination to inherit the whole or the greater part of old Moggs's property. Hence her assiduous attention to him, and her studied and successful efforts to banish Albert from his home, and her constant endeavor to poison the old man's mind against the absent youth. She intercepted the letters which Albert had addressed to his father for some weeks after his flight; she related to old Moggs, with many expressions of sorrow and concern, apocryphal stories con-

cerning his son's bad conduct, and the evil company he kept at "the bay"; and when requested by old Moggs to write to the boy kindly, in his name, and ask him to return home, she pretended to do so, but did not, and then complained bitterly of his ungrateful silence. She even went so far as to fabricate a disrespectful message from Albert to his father, which she pretended to have received through a gentleman who had met the boy in San Francisco and conversed with him about his family. Of course she studiously kept from her husband everybody who might, could, or would disabuse his mind in regard to his son's feelings toward him. And by these means she hoped she had succeeded in embittering old Moggs against Albert, and thus paving the way for the consummation of her own desires.

"My dear husband," said she, when the doctors had left them alone, and she could control her agitation sufficiently to speak, "it breaks my heart to think that I must so soon be left in this cold world without a protector, you have been such a good, kind husband to me."

"I am glad you think so, Sophronia," said old Moggs, turning his hideously bloated countenance upon his weeping wife; "but I think you'll get along as pleasantly without me. I have been a great burden to you; but you will be at least partly repaid—I shall leave you comfortably provided for."

"Oh, you good, generous man!" exclaimed she, with a burst of mingled tears and tenderness, gathering his ugly, swelled head to her bosom with an energy that made him wince; "you will leave *all* to me, won't you, dear?"

"Well, no," said old Moggs, struggling with all his feebleness to free himself from her embrace, which was more ardent than soothing, "I guess not. You will have your lawful share as my widow, and that will be enough to keep you comfortably if you remain single, or to portion you handsomely if you marry again—which I suppose you will do if you get a chance; and I shouldn't blame you, either. Remember, Sophronia, there are others beside you who have claims upon me."

She felt as if she would like to strangle him; but she only squeezed him a little tighter, to the imminent peril of his respiration, as she replied, with more tears:—

"Of course, my dear, I didn't mean exactly *all*; there's Euphemia's been like a

daughter to you, and I know you won't forget her."

"There, there, Sophronia," exclaimed old Moggs, impatiently, "you needn't choke me to death before my time comes. You seem to have forgotten that I have a son."

She wished he had forgotten it; but as he had not, she deemed it politic to recollect the fact.

"Oh, yes!" she said. "Although Albert has been so very undutiful, it is but natural you should do *something* for him; though of course you won't think of putting a fortune in *such* hands. It would only bring him the sooner to a dishonored grave."

Old Moggs turned away and closed his eyes, and his wife prudently forbore to press the subject any more at that time. But she returned to the charge again and again, until she found that so far as she was concerned her husband's mind was made up, and that she would receive not a cent more than her lawful dower.

But there was Euphemia. Old Moggs was evidently grateful to Euphemia, and might be induced to bestow upon her the other moiety of his estate—barring a trifling sum to his son,—and to secure this result Mrs. Moggs exerted all her influence, all her persuasive powers, all her skill. She taught Euphemia the trick of tears, so that old Moggs was often edified upon awaking from a brief slumber by finding his devoted sister-in-law weeping over him. And the two used, when out of sight but within hearing, to engage in such pathetic lamentations over him, and such delicious eulogiums of him! What effect this had upon him he did not reveal; but (as I think I have already stated) he had once been an actor himself. He gave them no further satisfaction than to order a special messenger to be sent for his son—which his wife promised should be done immediately, but took good care it should not.

Old Moggs grew worse, and the sisters grew desperate. They feared he would die without making a will. As a last resort they called in the assistance of Sam Pillkins, who was already in their councils; and they resolved to bring their united forces to bear upon old Moggs, assailing him at once, as it were, in front and on both flanks. The time chosen for the grand assault, which it was hoped would bring the moribund old man to reason, was, as it happened, the afternoon of the same day when old Pillkins was en-

deavoring, with such admirable want of success, to swindle Robert Deveridge.

When the triple alliance entered his chamber, old Moggs lay on his back, with his eyes directed toward the ceiling; but whether he noted the movements of the flies thereon disporting, or "in profound abstraction gazed into the dun obscure of his own mind," it would be difficult to tell. He was evidently so weak that the trio thought he could be easily awed into submission to their wills, and resolved to strike boldly. Sam Pillkins drew a table to the side of the bed, placed writing materials on it, and sat down beside it with a professional air; he took no notice of the movement. Then Euphemia coughed, sighed, and remarked:—

"My poor, dear brother!"—she had lately got the trick of calling him brother—"how badly he looks."

Old Moggs seemed still to ignore their presence. Mrs. Moggs then advanced to the bedside, and said:—

"My dear husband, it is a painful task to me to remind you of your duty. Your final hour is approaching, and you should lose no time in preparing for it. We are here for the purpose of learning your last wishes; and Mr. Pillkins is ready to write your will."

"Yes, Mr. Moggs," said Sam, as the dying man continued gazing vacantly at the ceiling, "I am, as you are aware, a lawyer,"—at these words the invalid turned his head, and regarded the speaker with a stony stare,—“and of course am accustomed to drawing up such documents. I will commence in the usual form."

He wrote rapidly for a few minutes.

"I give and bequeath," said he at length, repeating the words as they flowed from his pen, "to my beloved wife, Sophronia Moggs, one-half"—

"Oh, no, Mr. Pillkins," interrupted Mrs. Moggs, "two-thirds—write it two-thirds."

Sam looked at the invalid, who looked back at him with his fixed, stony stare. Interpreting silence as consent, he finished the paragraph as Mrs. Moggs desired and directed.

"And to my beloved sister-in-law," continued Sam, writing, "Euphemia Mergles"—

"The remaining one-third," suggested Mrs. Moggs.

Sam again looked at the invalid, and receiving consent as before, proceeded:—

"The remaining one-third of all my estate, real, personal and mixed"—

At that moment there was a rattling step on the front piazza, a rapid stride through the hall, the door of the sick chamber flew open with a clang, and Albert, overthrowing the writing-table in his haste, rushed to his father's bedside.

"My dear father!" he exclaimed, embracing the old man as well as he could under the circumstances. There were so many pillows and bed-clothes and things in the way that a regular stage embrace was out of the question.

"God bless you, my boy!" fervently ejaculated the old man, his puffy and livid countenance brightening with joy as he returned his son's embrace with a surprising degree of energy. "I knew you would come; the sight of you does me more good than doctors or nurses. But I should feel much better, Albert, if you would kick that *thing*"—pointing to Sam, who had hastily risen on Albert's entrance, and stood looking on with much the feeling of one who has gained surreptitious admittance to a theatre, and fears detection—"out of the house."

Albert, who was a stalwart youth for his years, instantly seized the fellow by the collar, and, in spite of his remonstrances and the shrieks of the women, propelled him to and through the front door with a vigorous application of sole-leather.

"Now," said the old man, when Albert returned from the execution of his task, "turn out these women, and shut the door."

Which having been done, explanations ensued between old Moggs and young Moggs which were highly satisfactory to both. In a few days old Moggs dismissed his physicians, having secured the services of an old quack from San Francisco, who cured him, to the great disgust of the regular faculty.

Euphemia retired to Snail Hollow, where she assists her mother in waiting upon guests at the Travelers' Rest, while Mrs. Moggs subsided into third place in her husband's household.

Old Moggs manages the Blunderbore mill and mine with all his former energy and success; while Albert, content with his histrionic laurels, is taking lessons with his father in practical milling and mining.

THE FETICH-MAN OF THE SAN PEDRO.

BY EDWARD DUSSEHAULT.

IN 1868 I had occasion to make a trip from the River Gambia to the Krou Coast; and after passing Cape Palmas, I landed at the principal Krou villages from Grand Tabou to the mouth of the San Pedro River. At the former place I engaged an interpreter who understood and could speak fluently the many dialects of this short coastline, where villagers, who in some instances live no more than five miles apart, cannot understand each other. My final landing on the outward journey was at the village of San Pedro, situated within half a mile of the headland that shoots out at the mouth of the river of the same name, and I remained here six days.

It was five o'clock in the evening when I landed, and my reception by the people of the place was much less cordial than it had been everywhere else. At all the other settlements the headmen had hastened to greet me at the beach, and escorted me ceremoniously to their huts, where I was made to feel at home, and kindly entertained. But here no one met me at the landing, and I had to find my way alone with my interpreter, whose name was Klar, to the group of Krou huts which constituted the village, about one hundred yards above high-water mark. The people were gathered here and there in groups, and when we walked in among them, scarcely seemed to notice us. We seated ourselves on a mat near one of the huts, and could see all that was going on. Two boys, not more than eleven or twelve years of age, were placed facing each other like game-cocks, and each was told that if he whipped his antagonist he would receive a reward. The little naked fellows were anxious to commence, but they were held back until they glared at one another like little fiends. At length they were released, and they fought brutally until exhausted, when they were carried away and washed.

Klar now sought the headman, and informed him of my purpose in landing, which was to buy all the rice he was willing to sell. I waited patiently. Presently the interpreter led the chief to me, and I was told that he would not be ready to trade for several days. Why? Because one of the

best men of the village had died suddenly. Somebody must have done it—"it was *fetich*"—and he must be detected.

I knew what that meant, and consequently asked no questions. We were led to a hut, which was placed at our disposal, and left alone. This Krou dwelling was round, and the eaves of its thatched roof extended far enough to form a sort of piazza outside, where we could sit and be protected from the sun. It faced the ocean, and from the door I could watch the heavy seas roll in regularly to break upon the sandy beach with a ceaseless roar that soothed like a lullaby.

"I no like dis, cap'n—leave we all alone here," remarked Klar.

"I would rather be alone than not," I replied. "I shall sleep all the better to-night on that account."

"You no mean for say you go sleep here to-night, eh, cap'n?"

"Of course I do; why not?"

"Dese people be no good, cap'n—bad *fetich* here; better we go aboard to-night."

"Bad *fetich*! Well, I want to see him."

"Want to see *fetich*, cap'n! How you go see him? Nobody go wi' you, 'cause dey all be 'fraid."

"Well, I'll go alone. Where's the *fetich*-house?"

"Look dare, cap'n," and Klar pointed to the headland at the mouth of the river, half a mile to our left. "It be dare."

"Up there on the rock?"

"Yes, cap'n."

"I'll go there. When the boat comes off to-morrow we can pull up into the river and climb up to the *fetich*-house. No one here will suspect what we are about."

Klar looked frightened.

"You go take me, cap'n?"

"Well, I shall not leave you here, that's sure; but you needn't go out of the boat when we go in the river, unless you wish."

"Ah! dat be good, cap'n; t'ank you."

It was now seven o'clock, and the natives were enjoying themselves in their usual way, dancing and shouting and making all the noise they could with their tom-toms. But the hut we had was at a sufficient distance from the merry-makers to deaden the

sound of their hilarity, and it was nearly drowned by the roar of the surf. I spread a mat within, on the ground near the door, and lay so as to be able to see out. Klar spread his mat outside, and I could not induce him to come in to sleep. He evidently feared to lie beneath a roof that sheltered one who had the temerity to regard a fetich with contempt.

I did not sleep as well as I had expected; I lay awake until nearly midnight. Twice, however, before that time I would have dozed, had I not been prevented, as I was about to close my eyes, by Klar, who crept from his mat outside to my door and asked:—

"You sleep, cap'n?"

"Yes, yes; go away and keep still," I answered each time.

And the poor fellow had slunk away to his mat, but not without casting furtive glances at me as he went. I saw that he was afraid, and for that reason concluded to call him back. He crept back to my door, but would not come inside.

"What's the matter with you, Klar?"

"I no savey what be de matter, cap'n; I cold—I sick—I"—

"'Fraid, aren't you?"

"Well, yes, cap'n; I be 'fraid. Dat fetich what live here very bad; p'r'aps he go 'witch me and say I kill dat man what die. Somebody mus' drink sass-wood; p'r'aps he go make me drink it—no one savey."

"Why should he pick you out? You haven't been here for three months, and this man died only four days ago."

"True, cap'n; but you see, when I here before, dis fetich what be here send for tell me he want one keg o' powder. I no been have powder for give him, and so he mad."

"Well, suppose he is mad, and suppose he makes you drink sass-wood. Haven't you told me many times that when an innocent man drinks it he vomits, and that it is only when a guilty man drinks that it kills?"

"Yes, I savey, cap'n; but when fetich no like you he can make sass-wood strong for kill you, no matter you no do not'ing bad. He can do what he like; he be god."

It would have been useless for me to try to convince him that his belief was unreasonable; hence I persuaded him to lie down, and he spread his mat nearer my door so I could see him. For though he did not dare to come inside with me, he was afraid to go

out of my sight. He slept before I did, but not soundly; he tossed about uneasily, and I watched him until I went to sleep myself. I do not think I am superstitious; I certainly am not sufficiently so to be affected by any kind of fetichism I ever saw; but, nevertheless, I did not sleep soundly. I dreamed of fetich-houses, and of drinking deadly decoctions to prove one's innocence; and finally, I saw a fetich-man seize Klar and drag him in the midst of the villagers, who stood ready to tear him in pieces. The fetich-man declared that he whom he had brought before them had bewitched the man who had recently died. Klar denied the charge. The sass-wood was produced, and he was told to prove his innocence by drinking the deadly potion. Klar took it with avidity. Cold perspiration trickled down my temples. I was horrified and jumped up, shouting:—

"Throw it down! Don't drink it!"

I was now wide awake, but I hardly realized I had been dreaming, my vision seemed so real. Klar sat on his mat with his face bowed down on his hands and groaned. I looked out from the door towards the cliff, at the mouth of the river—the site of the fetich-house—and perceived a light moving to and fro among the palms.

"Klar!" I called.

"Yes, cap'n," he answered, without raising his head from his hands.

"What light is that up there?" I asked.

"No look dare, cap'n, I beg you. Dat be fetich light—he get ready for do somet'ing bad. Oh, my! oh, my! you hear?"

I listened, and heard the sound of a machete striking the trunk of a tree.

"Big sass-wood grow dar; fetich chop some for to-morrow."

It was past three o'clock, and having no inclination to sleep, I sat outside and watched the surf beating upon the shore, until the monotony of the scene grew painful. I tried in vain to divert my mind, and at length the fetich-man came to my assistance by chopping again with his machete upon the trunk of the sass-wood to obtain bark for the decoction he was to mix. Every stroke of his tool, when it came in contact with the tree, threw out a clear, ringing sound, which was wafted to us by the gentle breeze from the eastward.

"Oh, my! oh, my! you see he get ready for do somet'ing very bad, cap'n," ejaculated Klar.

"What makes you think so?"

"Well, you see, cap'n, when he no want to kill nobody, he mix de sass-wood jus' before he make you drink 'im; but when he want to do bad he mix 'im long before, an' let 'im soak good; an' when he soak plenty he kill every time."

"So you think that he has made up his mind to kill somebody this time?"

"Yes, cap'n, sure; an' I 'fraid it be me."

"But he don't know you're here yet."

"No savey I be here, cap'n! He savey everyt'ing—yes, cap'n—an' he savey I be here. Fetich be god."

It was evident that the fetich-man was preparing for an unusual event. The recent death of the man, for whom the villagers seemed to have had profound respect, had doubtless furnished him with an opportunity to gratify his hatred of some resident of the place; and he had, consequently, hastened to declare that the deceased had been bewitched. It therefore became necessary to discover by whom it had been done; and that was the business of the fetich-man. He whom he would declare to be the culprit could hope for no mercy, for they who had been his nearest and best friends would help to rend him asunder. And if he dared to deny the charge, which seldom happened, he would be made to submit to some terrible ordeal, which here on the Krou Coast is always the drinking of a deadly decoction of the *casca* bark—sass-wood—when, if he vomits and recovers from its effects, he is declared innocent, and can claim from his accusers whatever he chooses, to compensate for the peril in which he has been placed. On the other hand, if he does not vomit he invariably dies, and the natives consider that he was the guilty one.

At six o'clock the boat shoved off from the vessel, and we went to the landing—one of the few good ones on this coast—to wait for it. As it touched the beach the crew jumped out and hauled it up; but they were immediately directed to launch it again, and we jumped in. We shoved off, and I directed the mate, who had come in charge, to steer for the river. The crew pulled vigorously, and we were swept round the bluff on the crest of a comparatively small sea into a placid stream of limpid water that, within the bar, is perfectly fresh.

As we glided in I looked up on the cliff, from which a path led down in a northerly direction, through a somewhat dense growth

of bushes, with here and there a large tree. Through the opening in these bushes I perceived a grotesque being walking rapidly downward from the bluff; his body was covered with green leaves, and his arms and legs were plastered over with a thick, clayey preparation, like mud. He had not seen us, for he hastened along without looking to the right or left, and finally turned towards the village. I pointed to him.

"No look at 'im, cap'n," Klar hastened to say, in a whisper. "Fetich!"

"Where do you suppose he is going now?" I asked.

"He go to town, cap'n, for tell headman get ready for 'im. He go do devil-work to-day."

"Well, what has he done with his sass-wood?"

"He leave dat in fetich-house, for soak good. Nobody go touch 'im, 'cause everybody 'fraid for go dare."

"Well, I'm going to steal that sass-wood and throw it away, and put something else to soak in its place that it won't hurt anyone to drink."

"Anybody do dat, cap'n, go die."

"I'll risk it."

"I'll be with you, sir," said the mate, who was a Jollof of the Gambia, and rather liked the idea of cheating a fetich-man. "And I think," he added, "that we're enough for any fetich-man round here."

Klar looked at us in astonishment, but said nothing.

The mate and I jumped ashore, followed by one of the crew, whose name was Gaspar, and who was less superstitious than the rest. We hastened up to the fetich-house, from which a disagreeable stench, like that of decayed and decaying animal matter, came. It was rectangular in shape, had a thatched roof, and was decorated with human skulls, two of which were recent acquisitions, for they were only half cleaned and were covered with maggots. We went in. The walls were hung round with cheap looking-glasses; and, besides two mats and a wooden pillow such as are used by the Kroumen, there was on the ground, which served for a floor, a large calabash filled with a muddy-looking fluid, in which floated bits of bark. This was the sass-wood.

"I can make some stuff that'll look just like that, sir," said the mate, laughing. "But we must throw this where nobody'll see it."

He lifted the calabash, and I helped him to place it on his head, where he balanced it, and walked out followed by me. We found a wide crevice in the rock, and into it we poured the deadly mixture.

"Who!" exclaimed the mate, "no man could live after drinking any of that. That fellow meant to kill somebody, sure."

He hurried down to the river with Gaspar, and filled the calabash with clean water. The sailor brought it back and replaced it in the fetich-house; he rejoined the mate, and I followed. The latter, with the boat's hatchet, peeled a quantity of bark from a mahogany tree; and Gaspar, with his sheath knife, stripped off some of the sappy rind of a fibrous plant, that grows abundantly along the river. We returned to the fetich-house, and the mate made his mixture by placing the bark he and Gaspar had collected into the water, which, after having been stirred up thoroughly, looked to me just as the fetich-man's decoction had. The bark that Gaspar had procured was picked out carefully and thrown out of sight, and nothing was left in the water save bits of mahogany bark which the mate had gathered.

"There, that'll do, I think," he said, chuckling. "That's a kind of sass-wood that won't kill anybody;" and he took some in the hollow of his hand and drank it. I tasted it; so did Gaspar, and the latter said:—

"Well, if that be poison, sir, we shall all die."

We pulled back to the village, where we all landed, and after beaching the boat above high-water mark, proceeded to the hut set apart for my use, and where I had passed the preceding night with Klar.

Two women brought us a large dish of rice and palm-butter, and a roasted Guinea fowl, which, with some bread that the mate had been thoughtful enough to bring from the vessel, constituted a breakfast that we all relished. While we were eating, two men came from the chief to request Klar to meet the principal villagers at the bantang, where there was to be an important palaver. The interpreter's lips blanched, and he rose to obey the summons.

"Finish your breakfast first," I said, "and then we'll all go."

He explained to the messengers that he would, in obedience to me, in whose service he was, wait until after we had breakfasted,

when he would without further delay pay his respects to the headmen.

The messengers withdrew.

"You see, cap'n, what I been tell you?"

"Well, if they want you to drink sass-wood you needn't be afraid to swallow all they'll give you. When we went to the fetich-house we bewitched all that the fetich-man had mixed, so that it can harm no one."

"But, cap'n, so soon as he see 'im, he go savey somebody been dare, and he go make more."

"Pshaw! no danger of that, Klar," said the mate. "I've done that thing before, and wasn't found out."

"Well, if I be for die to-day, I go eat my belly-full first," remarked Klar, with a lugubrious smile.

He forthwith helped himself with a large tin plate full of rice and palm-butter, and for a man who expected to be poisoned within an hour or two, he ate with a surprisingly good appetite.

At length we were all ready to go to the palaver, and Klar led the way to the bantang in the centre of the village, where were assembled the principal men, seated in a circle within which the fetich-man stood. We sat on mats spread upon the ground and watched the proceedings. The fetich-man, with his face, arms and legs besmeared with what appeared like clay, and his body covered with green leaves, after standing like a statue for some seconds, walked to and fro rapidly, chanted in a low voice and finally fell to the ground in apparently painful convulsions and shrieked. At length he rose to his feet, strode to a middle-aged man, who sat among the chiefs, tapped him upon the head, and beckoned to him to follow to the centre of the circle. The person designated tremblingly obeyed, and exclamations of astonishment escaped from the lips of his surprised companions. The eyes of the fetich-man now rested upon Klar, who sat near me, and he beckoned to him also to advance to the centre of the circle. Klar looked at me and said sadly, as he rose to obey:—

"Good-by, cap'n."

"Never fear," I said to him; "we won't let anybody harm you, fetich or no fetich."

"I hope so, cap'n; but you no savey what dey can do. God be god; man can't do not'ing 'gainst 'im."

Klar stood by the side of the first individual whom the fetich-man had brought within

the circle, and the latter, pointing to them, said, in substance:—

"One of these two men, perhaps both of them, bewitched our dead friend who, had it not been for them, would now be with us."

The villagers rose to spring upon them, and I hastened with my sailors to the side of the accused men, and for a moment kept their would-be executioners at bay. The excitement of the people, which was intense, was allayed by the fetich-man, who told them that he would settle the matter quietly. They reseated themselves, and we resumed our places upon our mats. The fetich-man went to a hut near by and returned with the calabash which the mate and I had emptied, and he, with the help of Gaspar, had refilled with the mixture which was now in it, and which we recognized. He placed it in the centre of our circle, and the mate could scarcely refrain from laughing aloud when Gaspar pointed out to him a long fibre of the sappy bark he had gathered adhering to the outside of the calabash.

The accused were questioned, and they declared they were innocent. Another vessel, to which half the contents of the first were transferred, was placed on the ground; and the grotesque and devilish master of ceremonies pointed to them. Klar and his companion in misery each took one of them and deliberately drank its contents, which must have filled a quart measure.

They laid down the calabashes they had emptied, and waited with anxiety, which they could not conceal, the result. The fetich-man looked at them with a half-frightened look, and was astonished, doubtless, to see that the mixture, which he had never known to fail to kill, had seemingly no effect upon his intended victims, who were no less surprised to find themselves alive and suffering no discomfort, as a consequence of the test that had been applied to them. The astonishment of the villagers was even greater than that of either the accused parties or the fetich-man. They had all seen sass-wood administered many times; it had always either killed quickly or caused a violent sickness, that left the victims in a weak condition from which it took them several days to rally. But in this case the fetich-man's decoction had no effect, and the two men who had drunk it were soon bereft of all fear, and Klar ventured to say, which was interpreted to me by the mate:—

"You see we are innocent; we are not even sick." And he chatted cheerfully with his companion.

"But," asked the chief, "where is the guilty man?"

The fetich-man, to whom this question was addressed, was confounded. He looked at his intended victims, at the headmen, and at me and my sailors; his gaze lingered upon us, as if he suspected that we, in some way, had interfered with his project. The villagers commenced to talk among themselves in a loud voice, and it was evident that their remarks were not pleasing to the puzzled fetich-man; he was a failure for the time being. At length he declared that an evil spirit was hovering about, whom it was necessary for him to drive away before he could point out the guilty one who had bewitched the deceased man; and he sprang away from us, and ran like a deer towards the bluff on which the fetich-house stood.

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed the mate and the sailors.

"Good-by, fetich," added Gaspar.

Even Klar and his companion smiled, and the former resumed his place with us, while the latter mingled again with the headmen, some of whom congratulated him upon his good fortune. But something more than congratulations were needed to compensate for the trial to which they had been forced to submit. The acquitted villager demanded two wives and one canoe. Klar asked for two hundred krous* of rice. A palaver ensued, in the course of which the chiefs endeavored to persuade the now triumphant pair to modify their demands. Klar was inexorable, but the villager reduced his requisition to one wife and one canoe; and such was the final agreement. This ended the palaver, and the headman ordered his people to deliver the two hundred krous of rice to Klar. It was measured that day, and put in casks to enable us to ship it dry. I bought this rice of Klar, and paid him in such goods as he required.

In addition to these two hundred krous, I bought three hundred from the villagers; and two days after the application of the sass-wood test, for the discovery of the culprit who had bewitched the late respected individual whom his surviving friends mourned, we sailed away on our return trip to the Gambia.

* Krou is the name of any measure mutually agreed upon between buyer and seller.

THE WRECK OF THE ATLAS.*

A TALE OF THE SEASIDE.

BY RAY THOMPSON,

CHAPTER I.

THE little village of Netherby is situated very nearly in the centre of that part of the Jersey coast known as Atlantic County. Viewing the town from the sea, a long range of green hills, dotted with low-roofed, weather-stained cottages meets the eye. On the beach below the dwellings stands a long row of poorly constructed buildings, whose rough board walls are draped with heavy festoons of nets, and bedecked with fish scales that sparkle like jewels in the sunlight.

Half a mile from the ocean is the village proper. On its ridiculous "Main Street," which runs straight from the beach into the country, are several stores, a hotel and a blacksmith shop. The remainder of the town is composed of quiet, grass-grown lanes, and trim, white cottages that hide themselves behind the surrounding shrubbery in all the bashfulness of modest merit. The present age of steam and rapid transit has done little toward bringing Netherby nearer the great commercial centres. The line of the locomotive lies a dozen miles away from the peaceful village, and the great steamers that appear daily in the offing never touch at the neglected port.

Thus removed from the beaten paths of travel, the spot has become favorably known to a few individuals whose inclinations lead them to seek out in the summer, a quiet retreat in preference to the crowded fashionable resorts. As a rule, the visitors are wealthy, middle-aged people, who arrive some time in June and remain until the latter part of August. At no time have the guests numbered more than twenty persons, and though their visits have slightly increased the revenue of the tradesmen, their coming has failed to dispel the calm tranquility which broods eternally over the place.

Such is a brief description of Netherby. At the time our story opens, it is in the early part of May, and a succession of heavy winds and rains have vexed the ocean and soaked the soil, until fishermen and farmers have been obliged to abandon their custom-

ary avocations, and wait helplessly for a change in the weather.

This season of enforced idleness which weighs heavily upon the laboring classes, fails to disturb the equanimity of Captain John Wilburt, who, by a succession of fortunate ventures in days past, has been rendered tolerably independent of the elements. The Wilburt homestead,—a brown old farmhouse standing upon a little eminence in plain sight of the sea,—is one of the cheeriest places imaginable. The wants of the worthy captain and his amiable wife being few, and easily supplied, the means at their disposal enable them to assist their poorer neighbors whose necessities, at a time like the present, frequently call for immediate relief.

At the close of an unusually disagreeable day, Captain Jack, as he is familiarly called, having returned from a visit to the fishermen's cabins, and being in rather a disconsolate frame of mind from listening to the prophecies of his discontented neighbors, removes his dripping oil clothes, and enters his own snug domicile, where his wife hands him a letter which she informs him has arrived by the afternoon post.

The mariner takes the missive gingerly between his thumb and finger, eyeing it with a glance of mingled curiosity and suspicion.

"'Tain't from Uncle Jake," he remarks, holding the envelope at arm's length and scowling perplexedly at the superscription. "Nor 'tain't from Aunt Mary," he continues, bringing the object under examination nearer his eye.

Thus he goes on, naming several individuals whom he declares cannot possibly have written the letter, until finally he concludes to open it and bestow his attention upon its contents. As he reads, his countenance brightens, and he exclaims:—

"It's from an old friend and owner, James Thornton. He wants to know if his girl can come and live with us a while."

"Did you ever!" ejaculates Mrs. Wilburt, astonished beyond measure at the unexpected intelligence.

"To be sure I have—lots of times," responds her husband, whose philosophical mind is not easily disturbed. "It's cur'us, but not so dreadful cur'us, after all"; he adds, with increased confidence in his ability to satisfactorily solve the mystery. "The fact is, it's come about as natural as most things that happen unawares, and is no more to be wondered at than a flash of lightning in a clear sky."

"Read the letter," commands Mrs. Wilburt, with a touch of wifely authority in her voice and manner.

In obedience to the order, the captain clears his throat, and with considerable difficulty deciphers the following:—

NEW YORK CITY, May 10th, 18—.

DEAR FRIEND WILBURT.—Since my visit to your place last fall, I have been wishing that my daughter could pass a few weeks in your quiet home. The death of her mother, in connection with other disappointments, has left Marcia in such poor health and spirits as renders an immediate change of scene necessary to her recovery. She has no desire to visit any of the popular resorts, but would like very much to live a while at Netherby, of which place she has heard glowing accounts from visitors. Although her aunt, Miss Dorkey, will accompany Marcia on any excursion she may undertake, I cannot think of sending two unprotected females among strangers. If Mrs. Wilburt can arrange to accommodate them, and you will consent to their coming, it will relieve me of much anxiety, and will afford them great pleasure. Of course I shall be most happy to compensate you so far as money can reward your kindness. Please answer at your earliest convenience, as I am quite anxious to learn your decision.

With much love to yourself and wife, I am

Very truly yours,

JAMES THORNTON.

As the captain crowds the letter into its wrapper, his wife draws a long breath. "It will be a great responsibility having the girl here," she remarks.

"'Twill be a tormented sight bigger responsibility *not* to have her," is the captain's spirited rejoinder. "Why," he continues with increased earnestness, "just think of it! The poor girl is penned up in the house where her mother died, and she's brooded over her misfortune till she's as un-

easy as an old sailor in a haunted ship. In this situation, she hails us, begging for a passage in a craft where things ain't so dismal like. We must either heave to and take her aboard, or up stick and run for it. I never yet refused to answer a signal of distress, and ropes-end me if I like the idea of learning to shirk duty at my time of life."

At the conclusion of this speech, Mrs. Wilburt, who has not heard a dozen words of it, remarked absently: "Besides the death of her mother, the letter hints at other disappointments the young lady has met with. I wonder what they are."

"Lord! how should I know?" said the captain, somewhat impatiently. "Perhaps she's cut her finger; or maybe her canary doesn't sing. These high-strung girls are as sensitive as a fair weather compass, and the least bit of a shake will keep 'em spinning for hours. But it makes no sort of difference whether persons are overboard in forty fathoms of water, or four; if we see 'em drowning, it's our duty to lend 'em a hand, without stopping to try for soundings."

"Well," observes Mrs. Wilburt, with a sigh of resignation, "I want to do whatever is right, but it's early in the season, and we don't live like city folks, and if the young lady grows discontented, or is taken sick—"

"There, there, mother," interrupts the captain, good-humoredly; "you want to start on a charitable cruise, but you're afraid to get under way because you can't see exactly how the voyage is going to end. In this case, we've only got to make sail and shape a true course. If we do this, and anything happens to prevent our reaching port, the log-book above will show that we are in no wise accountable for the disaster. And now," he adds with increased cheerfulness, "let's have supper, and then I'll answer Mr. Thornton's letter, telling him to send his daughter to Netherby as soon as he pleases."

Thus it is settled that the distressed damsel shall find a temporary asylum with the Wilburts. The Captain breathes easier when he has dispatched a letter announcing the fact, and he rejoices to the inmost depth of his hospitable soul when, a few days later, he receives an answer from the city merchant, thanking him for his kindness, and naming an early day for the arrival of the guests.

CHAPTER II.

AT the close of a dark, dismal day the unwieldy stage-coach, whose diurnal trips connect Netherby with the outer world, toils up the slippery ascent which forms the seaboard boundary of the town, and halts before the Wilburt cottage. Captain Jack, who has witnessed its arrival, hurries from the house, and, opening the coach door, assists two female passengers to alight, before the burly driver has time to descend from his perch or collect his fares.

The captain bestows a commiserating glance upon the muffled forms that stand shivering by the roadside, and remarks encouragingly:—

"Come right into the house, ladies. Under the present circumstances, ceremony ain't called for, as I once told a Sandy Hook pilot when I hauled him over the weather rail by the ears."

"The trunks," murmurs the taller female.

"I'll see to 'em," says the energetic skipper.

"There were four of 'em; bigger and heavier than so many chain lockers," he subsequently related. But with the assistance of the coachman they are taken into the cottage, and carried up-stairs.

Having performed this duty, the master of the house makes his way to the parlor, where his guests, divested of their wraps, stand warming themselves before a blazing wood fire.

At his approach, a young lady, stylishly dressed, with her forehead hidden beneath curls of dark-brown hair and her slender throat swathed in a grand scarf of black lace, makes a step forward and says confusedly:—

"This is Captain Wilburt, I believe."

The captain acknowledges his identity with a bow, remarking, as he clasps the speaker's slim white hand in his own broad palm:—

"And you are John Thornton's daughter."

To the amazement of the captain, the dark eyes fill with tears, and John Thornton's daughter ejaculates hysterically:—

"Oh, dear, how dreadfully embarrassing! Pa promised to come with us, but business prevented him, and here we are among strangers, with no one to introduce us, and——"

"Marcia," interrupts the tall female,

solemnly, "you must remember your nerves"; with which solemn injunction she smooths her skirts complacently, and glances at the excited girl with an air of profound pity.

Captain Jack turns to the speaker, with the manner of a man who is suddenly called upon to assume a great responsibility. "Miss—Mrs," he begins, and pauses confusedly, unable to recall his visitor's name, and not knowing whether she is married or single.

In this emergency, the younger lady comes to his relief, and introduces the stranger as "My aunt, Miss Dorkey."

"Miss Donkey," resumes the captain, "begging your pardon, I'll say there's no call for your niece to remember her nerves, seeing that—according to her father's letter—she's come down here to Netherby for the express purpose of forgetting 'em. My dear," he adds, addressing his young guest, and speaking very kindly, "more than twenty years ago your father put me in command of the first ship he ever owned. 'Take her, Captain,' he said, 'and look after her as though she was your own.' These were his parting words before starting me on an East India voyage. All the time I was away they kept ringing in my ears, and nobody knows how I watched and toiled to protect that bit of floating property. Well, the cruise was successful, and its profits enabled your father to add to his fleet of clippers, so that now, the loss of a dozen ships wouldn't beggar him. He never forgot my poor services; and while I followed the sea I sailed in his employ, and shared his prosperity. Now I am anchored ashore, he still shows his faith in me, by putting his daughter in my keeping. There's no need of introductions. I've got my orders and have shaped the course. Why," exclaims the speaker, as a straggling ray from the setting sun bursts through the leaden clouds and illumines the carpet at his feet, "you've brought fair weather with you, Miss Marcia; and if you hadn't, your sparkling eyes would brighten the old place like a light in the fore rigging. It's a pleasure to have you with us, and if you can put up with poor accommodations and plain living, we shall all be as comfortable as soldiers in a hospital."

To what further extent the captain's eloquence would have carried him, it is impossible to say; for at this juncture his wife enters the room, and announces supper.

Seated at the bountiful board, Captain Jack bows his shaggy head, and, unmindful of the elder lady's well-bred stare of surprise, implores a blessing on the food, before helping his guests to an abundance of everything set before them.

"You must be mindful of your diet, Marcia," is Miss Dorkey's officious warning, as she glances suspiciously at her niece's plate. "I really must urge you not to partake of that strawberry jam," she adds hastily, as the object of her solicitude prepares to taste a spoonful of the luxury.

Captain Jack eyes the speaker in amazement. "Miss Donkey," he says, drawing himself up in his chair, and speaking in a tone of calm authority, "When I used to have passengers on board, I sometimes found it necessary to remind them that I was captain of my own ship, and capable of taking care of all hands—themselves included. It's much the same with us here in this house, where I am captain, purser, and doctor, all in one. This being the case, and Miss Marcia having been put under my orders, of course it will be a proper time for her to stop eating when I say the word."

The mingled look of rage and mortification with which Miss Dorkey responds to the rebuke, is entirely lost on the captain, who proceeds to eat his supper with the calm assurance of a man whose conscience is wholly at ease.

When the meal is ended, and the visitors are seated in the comfortable parlor, Captain Jack unlocks an old-fashioned, square piano that stands in a corner of the room, and with much gravity requests Marcia to favor them with some music.

"It's been closed since our own girl died three years ago," he remarks, as he lifts its huge cover tenderly. "I suppose its out of tune, but here's the music the poor child used to play, and if you can strike a note that will remind me of the days when she was about the old place, it will be as good as a sermon to me."

Moved by the sadness of the speaker's voice and manner, Marcia seats herself at the instrument and glances over the little collection of music laid out for her inspection. Discarding the instrumental pieces, she selects from the simple repertoire, "The Banks o' Doon." After a short prelude, in the performance of which her jeweled fingers stray listlessly over the yellow keys, she sings, in a sweet voice whose very

weakness is well adapted to the plaintive air and mournful words,—

"Ye flowery banks o' bonnie Doon,
How can ye bloom sae fresh and fair?
How can ye chant, ye little birds,
An' I sae weary, fu' o' care?"

When, at the conclusion of the song, Captain Jack rises, and with grave courtesy thanks the singer for her kindness, there is a far-away look in his eyes, and a suspicious tremor in his voice, which assures her that she has "struck a note" that has indeed awakened dear memories in his honest, faithful heart.

At an early hour the guests retire to the cosy chambers placed at their disposal.

"Did you ever dream of anything more perfectly absurd than your father's sending us to this horrible place?" demands Miss Dorkey, entering Marcia's room the moment Mrs. Wilburt has left them.

"I see nothing foolish in pa's conduct; and as for the place, I think it lovely," Marcia replies, seating herself in a chintz covered chair, and clasping her hands in her lap.

"But the captain!" persists the elder lady. "You must admit that he is frightful."

"On the contrary, I think him delightful," is the enthusiastic reply.

"Well," remarks Miss Dorkey, making no effort to conceal her contempt, "there's no accounting for tastes; and if anyone prefers Netherly to Long Branch, and Captain Wilburt to a gentleman, I certainly shall not blame them for their preference, though I may pity their poor judgment. Good-night, my dear; I hope you may rest well in your bed under the eaves."

"I am sure I shall," responds Marcia; adding, as Miss Dorkey glides out of the room, "Good-night, dear aunt."

Left to herself, Marcia opens her trunk, and drawing forth a small writing-desk, proceeds to examine its contents. A bundle of letters tied with a blue ribbon, a bunch of withered flowers bound with the same material, and a photograph, upon which she gazes until her dark eyes grow dim and dreamy, comprise her most highly valued treasures.

The picture which absorbs her attention is the likeness of a rather good-looking young man, fashionably dressed, and standing in the conventional attitude beside a table, upon which his right hand rests neg-

lignity. His countenance is quite prepossessing, and would be taken by almost any stranger as security for its owner's high breeding and moral worth. Nor would such confidence, based apparently upon a slender foundation, be entirely misplaced. Walter Conroy is all that his appearance indicates him to be. Birth has made him a gentleman, and a rise of real estate has made him a millionaire. A generous nature and an agreeable presence have made him a good fellow, also; so that, wherever he goes, he is regarded as the flower of an old and honorable family, and an ornament to the highest circles.

It is not to be wondered at that Marcia has been dazzled by the brilliancy of this modern Prince Charming, or that her heart has yielded readily—perhaps too readily—to a warm assault which he made upon that weakly guarded citadel a year previous to the commencement of our story, during a summer's sojourn at the White Springs. But without commenting on her surrender, we will state as a fact that at the conclusion of her holiday, she had returned to New York the affianced bride of Walter Conroy.

Marcia's happiness, however, proved to be of short duration. Upon learning that her son was gradually estranging himself from his peers and wasting his affections on a city merchant's daughter, the maternal Conroy, who was as proud and ambitious as Lucifer, took immediate steps to break what she was pleased to term "a disgraceful connection." In her efforts she was materially assisted by John Thornton, who, with a pride that equaled her own, forbade Walter's visits, and kept his daughter under strict surveillance, trusting that time would cure her of her infatuation.

Walter, annoyed by opposition on all sides, and convinced that his absence would bring about a reconciliation quite as speedily as his presence, was induced to visit Europe, and Marcia was left disconsolate in her father's grand house, to mourn the departure of her lover, and to break her heart in weeping over the poor handful of mementos that now lies in the desk before her.

As she gazes with tearful eyes upon the likeness, her mournful meditations are interrupted by a stentorian voice below stairs. Rising hastily, she opens the chamber door, and with no little trepidation, listens to learn the cause of the outcry.

There is no occasion for alarm. The

shouting proceeds from no less a personage than Captain Jack, who is at his customary evening devotions, and who is addressing the God of the universe with the same force and directness that he would employ in hailing a man at the mast-head. To the surprise of his listener, he roars out the conclusion of his petition as follows:—

"And, O Lord, bless the poor girl who has come to us this evening like a singing-bird in a storm. Help us to lighten her burden, whatever it may be; and when earthly friends have piloted her safely through the storms and headflaws of life's ocean, take her into Thine own keeping, guiding her peacefully into the quiet waters of the unseen deep beyond."

Inspired with a sense of security and protection to which she has long been a stranger, Marcia closes the door noiselessly, and, having locked the picture and the letters safely in her desk, retires for the night, to sleep soundly in her bed beneath the eaves.

CHAPTER III.

A CLOUDLESS sunrise, with a sky of orange red, and with the sea line silver blue against it, greets Marcia's vision as, drawing aside the white curtain, she peeps out of her chamber window in the morning. The cold spring rains have at last been succeeded by pleasant weather, and all nature seems to rejoice at the change. Looking toward the east and south, Marcia pauses for awhile to watch the deepening rose color as it tints the piles of snowy clouds that dapple the peaceful sky; then, feeling devotedly thankful that she is not obliged to dress for company, the fair watcher makes a hurried yet tasty morning toilet, and hastens to join Captain Jack, who is pacing an imaginary quarter deck in the front yard.

"Am I out too early?" she asks, as the mariner pauses in his walk to stare at her with a look of pleased surprise.

"Bless your eyes, pretty one," he says in his cheery voice, "you can't get up too early or lie abed too late, or do anything else that isn't altogether right and reasonable." Then, as if his prolonged scrutiny requires an explanation, he adds: "I was looking at your gown, and thinking how proud it must make your father to see you rigged out in

such fine colors, and sailing around among the other girls like a fancy yacht in a fleet of lumber droghers."

Though secretly pleased at the compliment, Marcia answers with becoming modesty: "If I am better dressed than others, the circumstance is due to pa's generosity, and not to any merit of my own."

"Exactly," rejoins the captain, rubbing his broad palms, and noting with delight the blush that mantles the cheek of his listener. Then he adds, with a touch of solemnity in his voice and manner, "Your father, Miss Marcia, can dress you like a queen, and load you with all manner of costly trinkets, but all his wealth can't buy you a contented heart; *that* prize lies like a pearl at the bottom of the sea, and if you want it you must win it by your own exertions."

"How shall I set about the task?" asks the young lady, with a little laugh in which there is no merriment.

"By doing no more nor less than your duty."

The words are accompanied with a glance so full of meaning that they become weighty with significance, and make a deep impression on the girl's susceptible nature. When good Mrs. Wilburt has called the two indoors, and they are seated at the breakfast table, Marcia glances stealthily at her counsellor, and wonders if in all the varied phases of human experience there is a duty he would hesitate to perform.

When, at the conclusion of the meal, he suggests that they walk down to the beach and watch the fishing fleet get under way, Marcia hastens to her room, where she makes a few necessary changes in her dress, and without waking her aunt, rejoins the captain, whose words still ring in her ears.

Very proud is the captain as he conducts his fair young charge among the groups of fishermen that throng the beach. In introducing her, he is careful to inform his acquaintances that she is the daughter of his old friend and owner, James Thornton, a bit of intelligence that causes aged men to bare their gray heads in her presence, while the younger fellows regard her as a sort of expensive curiosity that has been brought to Netherby at Captain Jack's express command.

"Would you like to go on board one of the fishing smacks?" asks the captain, when they have exhausted the simple sights of the shore.

Marcia replying in the affirmative, her attentive escort procures a boat, and they row off to a trim little craft that lies anchored a short distance from the beach.

On board the smack, a strongly-made fellow of twenty-two or three, with a low-crowned, glazed hat jammed over his eyes, and with his hands thrust negligently into the pockets of his pantaloons, is leaning against the mainmast. Beyond glancing indifferently at the approaching boat, he pays not the slightest attention to the visitors.

Captain Jack climbs over the rail, fastens the boat, and after assisting his companion on board, turns to the young man, and asks, with an air of friendly interest:—

"Where's Uncle Abel?"

"Ashore," is the laconic reply.

"Coming off soon?"

"Dunno."

"Lines all aboard?"

"Yes."

"I was thinking," remarks the captain, "that you might be wanting to borrow something of the kind; I've got plenty of 'em, you know."

"I want nobody botherin' on my account," is the gruff rejoinder; "I ask no favors." And having thus brought the conversation to an end, the surly fisherman prevents its renewal by lounging forward, out of the way of the visitors.

For a moment Captain Jack eyes the fellow as though he would like to collar him and bring him back. Then he turns to Marcia, who has been an amazed listener to the dialogue, and says, in a mysterious whisper:—

"Young feller's masterly hove down; wouldn't 'a' brought you aboard if I'd known he was here alone."

There is no chance for further explanation on board the little craft, and after Marcia has peeped into the dingy binnacle, and has heard the captain go through the formula of boxing the compass, they take their departure.

By this time the fitful morning breezes have settled into a steady off-shore wind, and nearly every vessel in the fleet has spread its white wings, and is standing out to sea.

"How I would like to follow them!" is Marcia's involuntary exclamation, as a bluff-bowed schooner goes surging past.

"Nothing easier in the world," responds Captain Jack, without pausing in his row-

ing. "My own boat is always ready for a cruise, and we have only to slip the cable and make sail."

In another moment they are on board the captain's yacht; a large, cat-rigged craft, christened, after his wife, the Nancy Wilburt. "Which is as good a name, if I do say it," remarks the captain, "as was ever tacked on to a boat, or a woman."

The broad sail is quickly hoisted, the moorings are cast off, and with the wind on her quarter, the lively craft bounds lightly over the sparkling waves, in friendly pursuit of the flying fleet, the nearest vessel of which is now a quarter of a mile distant.

Ensconced snugly in the stern-sheets, Marcia listens with pleasure to the incessant ripple against the boat's side, and views with delight the wide expanse of water and limitless sky. Beside her, with his hand on the tiller and his eye on the sail, sits the captain. A genial smile shines upon his rugged features, like sunlight on the face of a granite cliff, rendering him a truly pleasing object to contemplate.

After they have sailed for some time in silence, Marcia, whose curiosity has been aroused by the scene on board the fishing smack, asks, with apparent unconcern:—

"Did I understand you to say, captain, that the young man on board the boat we visited was in trouble?"

"That's what I meant," replies the captain. "At any rate," he adds, as if to qualify his assertion, "the lad *has* been in trouble, and he seems bound to stay in it. Lord," he continues, drumming with his fingers on the tiller, "how many people there are in the world who seem determined to make heavy water in smooth sea. They remind me of old Cap'n Sam Beckett, who was so cautious that he'd run under shortened sail for twenty-four hours after a gale had blown itself out. It's just so with Tom Bagley. He was caught aback and hove down, but he's righted now and has filled away; and instead of mourning over his misfortune, he ought to bless his lucky stars that he's seen the worst of a bad job.

"You see," continues the speaker, observing the inquiring glance of his listener, "Tom has got the Bagley temper, and when he came home from the West Indies, a year ago last winter, and found that his Uncle Eph had foreclosed the mortgage on his mother's house, he was wilder than a devil-fish. Without stopping to consider the

matter, he made a straight wake for his uncle's house, and walked right into the parlor where Eph was sitting with the minister, hearing the girls play the piano. Tom raved and stormed like a nor'-wester, shaking his fists, and cursing his rich uncle for distressing a poor woman—and that woman his own brother's widow. After scaring the family almost into fits, the headstrong fellow left the house, swearing vengeance on its owner.

"As bad luck would have it, Eph's buildings were burned to the ground that very night. Before the ruins were done smoking Tom was arrested for setting the fire. His case was soon tried, and though he stuck to it that he had no hand in the job, the facts, so far as they could be got at, were against him, and he was sentenced to serve six years in prison. I couldn't believe the boy guilty, and though the minister himself blamed me for it, I did what I could to help him at the trial. When it ended in his being locked up, I started a petition for his pardon. I got a long list of signers, and when the Governor examined it, he was led to inquire into Tom's case. The result was that the prisoner was discharged after serving one year of his sentence. About two months ago he came to see his mother, who was living with her brother, Abel Shirley. Tom didn't want to stop in these parts, but his mother begged so hard for him to give up making long voyages, that finally he consented to try his hand at fishing. With the help of his Uncle Abel, he repaired the craft we visited, and though the weather has been against them, the two have managed to make the old boat earn them a living.

"But Tom's a changed fellow since he came out of prison. To see him now you'd scarcely believe that he was once as cheerful and light-hearted a chap as ever hauled on a rope; yet I can remember a time when it would have done your heart good to hear him singing in his dory of a morning. He never sings now-a-days, and I doubt if he has smiled since he got his sentence. It doesn't take much to drive the sunshine out of a young heart, and Tom's trouble has fairly unsettled him."

"Do the people of Netherby believe the young man guilty?" asks Marcia, as the captain pauses in his narrative.

"N-no," is the hesitating reply; "a few persons, perhaps, may think Tom set the

fire, but even they are ready to excuse the deed, seeing as how the lad was provoked beyond endurance. As for Eph Bagley, whose meanness was at the bottom of the mischief, our people got so down on him after his nephew got convicted that he was glad to move with his family to New York. His buildings were insured for all they were worth, so the fire was small loss to him."

"I can imagine that it must be a dreadful thing to spend a year in prison. Still, if a man is accused falsely, and is afterward pardoned, and has friends to stand by him, I think he ought not to be unhappy forever," says Marcia, soberly.

"Certainly not," assents the captain; "you take a sensible view of the matter, Miss Marcia. But, you see, Tom Bagley is a good deal like the clipper ships that used to be built for the China trade. Give them smooth water and a fair breeze, and they'd outsail anything afloat; but when it came to clawing along against a head wind, or driving into a cross sea, they were as cranky as canoes, so that clumsier ships frequently beat them on long voyages. It's much the same with Tom Bagley. Give him fair weather and he'll go ahead like a steamboat; but let him fall in with a hurricane and he's easily capsized, and once on his beam ends there's no righting him. Before he got into trouble he was courting Susan Hanson, whom everybody allowed was the best and prettiest girl in town. I used to see them walking out together; Tom in his Sunday rig, and Susan in her best gown, and flying more pennants and streamers than an English frigate on the Queen's birthday. They were a handsome couple, and everybody was looking to see them spliced as soon as Tom got home from the West Indies. But there's little chance of such a thing happening now. Tom hasn't been near his sweetheart since the night of the fire. I don't say he isn't right in standing off for a while, but still it seems to me as though it was now time for him to square away and sail into the girl's affections, and live happily. But Tom's too proud to offer an explanation, and Susan's too high-spirited to ask for one; so off they go on different tacks, and I'm afraid they'll soon be out of hailing distance."

At this point Captain Jack breaks off abruptly in his narrative, and as they are now in the midst of the outward bound

fleet, he devotes himself to giving Marcia a description of the different vessels. She listens absently to his nautical explanations, and gives a ready assent when he proposes heading the boat for home. Her thoughts are of the unfortunate Tom Bagley, and she wonders if it will be in her power to assist the despondent ex-convict. Captain Jack's warning, that she can only gain a contented mind by doing her duty rings in her ears, and she begins fancying that her first duty will be to aid the released prisoner, and assist him in regaining a foothold in respectable society.

While her mind is thus occupied, the little fishing vessel which bears the object of her meditations comes sailing past. At the helm stands a gray-haired, mild-faced old man. He waves his hand to Captain Jack, who returns the compliment by swinging his hat.

In the vessel's bow, seated on the little windlass, with his elbows resting on his knees and his face buried in his hands, is Tom Bagley. He makes no sign of recognition, and receives no friendly salutation. In another moment the two crafts are far apart, one speeding toward the shore, and the other ploughing through the brine on her way to the distant fishing ground.

As the boat approaches the land, Marcia discovers a man and a woman standing on a rocky point which makes out into the ocean some distance above the village. The former waves his hat, and the latter her handkerchief, observing which signals, Marcia calls the captain's attention to them, remarking that the couple are evidently waiting to welcome them home.

"By Judas!" exclaims the captain, hastily changing the boat's course; "they've wandered out on Stony Point, and the rising tide has cut them off from the main land. It's lucky for them that we have happened along, as the fleet has sailed, and folks can't see them from the town. Can you make them out, dear?"

"The woman looks like Aunt Dorkey, though it's impossible to be certain who it is at this distance."

"Well, we'll soon have her aboard, and the man with her," says the captain, giving a pull at the sheet.

The little craft flies over the waves as if in haste to succor the unfortunates, while its occupants strain their eyes in an attempt to identify the couple.

CHAPTER IV.

"DON'T be alarmed, my dear Miss Dorkey, the boat is certainly heading this way."

Standing upon a narrow ledge which is entirely surrounded by the waters of the Atlantic, and whose wave-worn sides offer no bar to the rapidly rising tide, the speaker turns from surveying a small craft in the distance to gaze upon his companion in misfortune. He is a dark, sallow-visaged man, whose age may be anywhere from thirty-five to sixty; for while his features are marked by the hard lines of time, his figure has every semblance of youth. The character of his face is peculiar. Although the forehead and eyes are intellectual and candid, the lower jaw and mouth reveal an expression of cruelty, which is heightened by a pair of thin, straight lips, and a long, pointed chin.

There is nothing commonplace about Arthur Haldane; he would not pass unobserved anywhere; and yet his general appearance is equally far from the type of high birth. His manner, however, even under the present trying circumstances, is perfectly well-bred, and he eyes the unfortunate female at his side with an air of respectful solicitude which ought to win from her a grateful acknowledgment.

But Miss Dorkey is in no condition to acknowledge anything save the horrors of her present situation. Her hat has blown away, her limp bangs hang like forked radishes over her narrow forehead, her feet are wet, and the salt breeze that sweeps across the water seems as if it would chill the very blood in her heart. All things considered, she is the personification of feminine distress, and may therefore be pardoned for remarking, snappishly:—

"If your foresight had equaled your present watchfulness, Mr. Haldane, I should not have been led into this awkward predicament."

The gentleman bows with becoming humility, his politeness not allowing him to remind the lady that it was she who suggested a stroll on the Point.

After a moment's silence, Miss Dorkey resumes: "In alluding to this adventure on future occasions, I hope you will not consider it necessary to go into detail; the merest outline, you know, will serve to make us both appear sufficiently ridiculous."

"Give yourself no uneasiness, Miss Dorkey. You cannot possibly be more ashamed of the circumstance than I am."

Further conversation is checked by a hoarse hail from the approaching boat.

"On the rock, there! Get over to leeward, and stand by to jump aboard the minute we come alongside."

"Heaven preserve us!" cries Miss Dorkey, recognizing the voice; "it's that odious sea-captain. I declare, I would almost as lief drown as be taken off the rock by him."

"I haven't the honor of his acquaintance," remarks the gentleman, coolly; "but if you request it, I will ask him to let you remain here."

By this time the boat is brought skillfully alongside the rock. Putting one brawny hand against the ledge, Captain Jack steadies the dancing craft, and says, shortly:—

"Get aboard, friends. Time and tide and the Nancy Wilburt wait for no man—or woman, either," he adds, seeing that Miss Dorkey is hanging back.

At this instant, and as if to add force to the captain's warning, a mimic wave rears itself between the rock and the boat, and slops playfully into Miss Dorkey's low-cut shoes. The hint suffices for the hesitating spinster. She gives a little scream, grasps her soaked skirts convulsively, and is handed into the boat by her companion, who immediately after tumbles into the bow.

"Shove off," says Captain Jack, authoritatively.

Mr. Haldane obeys the order, and the boat, catching the wind abeam, goes flying toward the shore.

"How *did* it happen, Aunt Dorkey?" Marcia asks, with a frightened glance at the half-submerged rock.

Without answering the inquiry, the rescued lady musters her remaining dignity, and says, with freezing politeness: "Captain Wilburt, allow me to present my friend, Mr. Haldane, an old acquaintance, whom Marcia seems to have forgotten."

"Keep your sitting, mister," cautions the captain, as the stranger makes a desperate attempt to get upon his legs. "I'm so glad to see you safe aboard this craft that I sha'n't question your manners."

"I, too, am glad to see you, Mr. Haldane, though I am sorry to have met you under such unpleasant circumstances," Marcia says, contritely, and with a glance at the gentleman's sea-stained clothing.

"If my misfortune serves to make me welcome, I shall be the last person in the world to regret it," replies Mr. Haldane, with a sharp glance at the speaker.

"It's quite like a romance," says Miss Dorkey, addressing her neice in a sudden burst of confidence. "Mr. Haldane arrived last night by a private conveyance. Learning our whereabouts this morning at the hotel, he set out to favor us with an early call. I took him down to the beach, expecting to find you there. Disappointed in seeing you, we wandered around, and finally walked out on those horrid rocks, thinking to get a better view of the ocean. Before we knew it we were surrounded with water, and no one was in sight to afford us the slightest assistance. I shouted till my throat was sore, hoping to arouse some one on the main land. My cries brought no aid, and if your boat had not happened along, I am sure I don't know what we should have done. As it is, I have suffered terribly; my hat is lost, my dress is ruined, and I am wet through. Don't I look a perfect fright?" she asks, appealing to the company in general.

Captain Jack eyes the dismantled spinster as critically as if he had been appointed to estimate and report as to the full extent of her injuries. Having finished his scrutiny, he delivers himself as follows:—

"You ain't quite as scrumptious looking as a vessel just off the stocks, that's a fact, Miss Donkey; but, as the insurance men say when owners bring in a bill for repairs, 'a little fresh paint goes a long way in brightening up an old craft.'"

The captain's opinion is received in silence, and but little conversation is indulged in until the party is landed on the beach. Leaving the skipper to moor his boat, the visitors climb the narrow path leading to the Wilburt cottage. At the gate Miss Dorkey murmurs a hasty apology and hurries indoors, leaving her neice to dismiss the gentleman in a more leisurely fashion.

"Won't you come in?" Marcia asks, with a faint attempt at hospitality.

The gentleman glances at his soaked patent leathers, and replies: "Thanks, no. I must hurry back to the hotel, and repair damages, as our nautical friend would say."

As he appears in no hurry to start, Marcia asks, for want of anything better to say, "Shall you remain long in Netherby?"

"That depends. My business is in such

shape that I can stay through the season if I wish. Having found you here, I shall be likely to remain as long as possible—that is, unless your visit is to be a short one."

"My stay, like your own, will depend altogether upon circumstances," Marcia says, coloring visibly.

Her confusion is observed by Haldane, who hastens to remark with apparent carelessness, "Well, while we are both here, let us try and be neighborly. I shall insist upon a friend's privilege of calling on you often, and if I hit upon any plan for amusement, I shall expect you to assist me in carrying it out."

Scarcely knowing how to reply to this cool proposition, Marcia is delighted when the sudden appearance of Captain Jack relieves her from the necessity of saying anything.

The sight of the mariner has a precisely opposite effect upon Haldane, who, laboring under a deeper sense of obligation than he cares to acknowledge, is nevertheless forced to say, "If it is not too late, I would like to thank you for your service, Captain Wilburt. I know that I have escaped a great danger, and I shall be grateful for your aid as long as I live."

"Perhaps you will, and then again perhaps you won't," says the captain, dryly. "When I was in the old ship *Leopard*," he continues, "I took a crew of Brazilians off a polacre that was sinking near the mouth of the Santos river. The poor creatures were so thankful for their deliverance that they danced and capered around me till the mates had to drive them off the poop. I was almost as happy as they were, though as matters afterward turned, there was no call for anybody to be particularly joyful. When we got to Rio, the custom house officers knew the shipwrecked diegos for a gang of smugglers; consequently, they were put on board the *guarda-costa*, and hung in less than forty-eight hours after our arrival. When I saw the bodies swinging at the yard-arm, I said to myself, 'Ah, my lads, had you known what was good for yourselves, you would have stuck by your sinking craft and died like true sailors; and had I known what was going to happen to you, I should have thought twice before taking you into port to be strung up like dogs.'"

The speaker breaks off abruptly, and Haldane, who has listened uneasily to the grim tale, says with heightened color:—

"As I am not likely to be hung for smug-

gling, I think I may safely venture to thank you for having saved my life."

"Aye," retorts the captain, dubiously, "I suppose it's right enough to call any breeze a fair wind till it heads us off."

Haldane smiles approvingly, and says: "Your philosophy suits me well, captain; and now, if we have discussed the subject sufficiently, allow me to thank you again for your assistance, and bid you good-day. Miss Marcia, I hope you won't let the captain's story lead you into wishing me back on that frightful rock. On the contrary, you ought to take a friendly interest in the future career of your humble servant, whose late misfortune certainly entitles him to sympathy." He concludes his speech with an evident attempt at gayety, and raising his hat politely, walks briskly away.

"I forgot to ask him to call," Marcia says, as Haldane disappears from view.

"No matter; he'll come," responds the captain, confidently; then he asks, "What's his calling?"

"He has something to do with ships, I believe. At any rate, he has visited our house frequently on business, and once asked him to dinner. Since then I have met him two or three times in the street, which is the extent of my acquaintance with him."

"He looks like a man to hang around a broker's office, ready to pounce on a ship and gobble up half her freight money," says Captain Jack, with a grunt.

Marcia makes no reply to this assertion, and a moment later the two betake themselves indoors, where they favor Mrs. Wilburt with an account of their morning adventure.

[To be continued.]

LIFE'S GOLDEN AGE.

ALL the world has shrunk since the Golden Age of our childhood. Time was longer, and people were taller then. A wet day was the depth of despair and the end of all things; the hours also were longer, and a year from January to December lapsed slowly by, like the prehistoric ages. The future seemed to be bringing a measureless succession of such years until the gigantic height of grown-up people would be reached; but life was so long, it was hardly worth while to think about the mystery of growing to their height at last. Our old home has shrunk since those days; the rooms are smaller and darker; the trees, once familiar, would be narrower if we could see them now; the garden has shrunk, too; the trees have been growing down; and the church spire is stumpy, as if Time had pushed its top lower, like a shutting telescope. Beyond the home circle, who were part of our existence, the grown-up people of the Golden Age were a mysterious race. They cared no more for games or playthings; though we refused to believe that any length of years would make us cease to care for hide-and-seek among the gorse and the billows of ferns, and for the mustering of tin

armies or the acquisition of new toys. Not only were the grown-up people in a dried-up state of indifference to games and plays, but they actually laughed at things that were not in the least funny. They never cried; they never ran; they did not ask for pudding twice, though they might have it; they had learned all possible lessons long ago, and had managed to remember them for the rest of their lives, and they knew all about everything always.

But oh, the green world of those days! Have the green lanes since wound on through golden light and moving leaf-shadows? Have the corn-fields been so broad beyond the hedges, such a sea of warm and breeze-swept yellow ripeness, flecked all along near the hedge-path with sparkling blue, and with blazing red poppies? Have the skies been so far away since, where the lark sang out of sight, and where, with our head on the grass, we made upward voyages among the towering white clouds in the clearness of breezy summer days? Have the summers burned the dusty roads so white? And has the milk been so sweet within sight of the sheds at a doorway under thatched eaves? Is the noon-tide

stillness of the hot country, the siesta of the birds, as deep as it was then? Is the scent of the honeysuckle as strong, and the smell of the hay? Are there bright beetles in the hay-field yet, and are butterflies becoming extinct, compared with their old numbers? Is it possible to have hay-battles, now that there seem to be so many painful stubble-fields to traverse in this world of ours? Who will give us back the heart-thrill of our first sight of the mountains? Who will remind us of the actual refreshment of wading in the shallow sunny brook, or swinging over it from ropes tied to the white-blossomed trees? Who will send us another song like our first hearing of the noise of the great unresting sea, or another sight like the first vision of its foam-fringed, sky-bounded, sun-dazzled waters? When the moon shone on the water then, one longed to look all night; when the winter stars were out, there was no pageant like the heaven of heavens. In that Golden Age the world might have been created and called good but yesterday, so new a world it was. We saw.

The earth and every common sight

Appareled in celestial light,

The glory and the freshness of a dream.

But the glory and the freshness were in ourselves. Wordsworth calls it the hour "of splendor in the grass, of glory in the flower." Not all the splendor has departed; the sun of those days and the light of our first love are still lingering in the sunlight of to-day. George Eliot tells us how a forest of young golden-brown oak branches with the light gleaming through, and with ground-ivy and blue speedwell and white star-flowers below, is more beautiful to the heart than all the grandeur of tropical forests, because it holds "the subtle, inextricable associations the fleeting hours of our childhood had left behind them. Our delight in the sunshine or the deep-bladed grass might be no more than the faint perception of wearied souls, if it were not for the sunshine and the grass in the far-off years which still live in us, and transform our perception into love."

A yearning for that Golden Age of life has come in earnest moments to half the world. The poets have sighed for it, and one of the sweetest songs that tell of saddest thought became a favorite long ago because it told how, in gathering shells on the beach,

A dream came o'er me like a spell—

I thought I was again a child,

Now why is childhood called the happiest time of life? And if it be life's Golden Age, why cannot we keep the gold?

The reasons why that period is envied seem to be these: First, and most subtly underlying all envy of childhood, is the knowledge that it is the time when we have our whole life before us. Often it is not the return of the state itself that is desired, but its anticipation of life which we feel to be swift and short, and of a past which is irrevocable. Not to be children again, but to have our chance again, is the wish underlying most of the yearning. Apart from this, there are many other reasons. We may place as the second, the freedom of childhood from responsibility and care; and next, its freshness and its habitual joy; and last, but very far from least, the atmosphere of loving service, kindness, and tenderness which surrounds that helpless period. Of course, we are speaking of childhood under favorable circumstances; no one, except, perhaps, a dying man would envy the beginning of life in extreme poverty or in loveless hardship.

Other reasons there are for looking back tenderly to that Golden Age; it was the time when we possessed unconsciously all the spiritual beauty that we recognize now as the inner charm of little children. They walk in the paradise of an unfallen world; their simplicity is their greatest attraction; their faith and trust in those that care for and provide for them is absolutely perfect; without any words, they know that the home-love will last; without taking thought, they expect to-morrow to be cared for like to-day. Lastly, they love much, and from the first love they receive, their life takes vigor and color. They are like young plants straining to the light, and enriched according to their share of warmth and sunshine.

But there is to the Golden Age another side. It is not perfection; it is not entirely happy. How imperfect it is, all of us know, and the flaws on the surface are not the saddest; in fact, without some of these, we should hardly recognize our human fellow-mortals, or we should doubt that we knew them well. A great educator in his day was wont to say that he dreaded receiving a boy whom the parents presented with pride as faultless; he dreaded that the faults were within, ready to break out as childhood disappeared. But all lovers of children will acknowledge the manifold imperfection that

is a part of their being; and perhaps we should not love them so well if it were not craving our sympathetic care. Again, this Golden Age is not an entirely happy time. It is true that the outbursts of sobbing are forgotten sooner than we can forget our sorrows; but the sobs were real while they lasted. As George Eliot says, this anguish appears very trivial to weather-worn mortals, who have to think about Christmas bills, dead loves, and broken friendships, but it may be not less bitter, perhaps it is more bitter, than later troubles. "We can no longer recall the poignancy of that moment, and weep over it, as we do over the remembered sorrows of five or ten years ago. Surely, if we could recall that early bitterness and the dim guesses, the strangely perspectiveless conception of life that gave the bitterness its intensity, we should not pooh-pooh the griefs of children."

So we have decided that the Golden Age is not perfect—anything but it! And it is far from being entirely happy. There is another consideration to be taken into account—what happiness we possessed in childhood we did not understand or value. We had that "strangely perspectiveless view of life," which prevented us from enjoying our happiness as we enjoy it now, when we know its value better, through experience, and through a wider view of the world. The want of a perspective to their world gives to children's grief its intensity; they cannot look beyond; they cannot understand its passing away. But it also gives to joy its shallowness; and there are manifold meanings in the saying, that unless we have suffered we cannot rejoice. Therefore, in sighing for life's Golden Age again, the sigh means a wish, not for childhood as childhood is, but for childhood with the added consciousness and experience of after-years. To have freedom from care, and to know what a burden care can be; to have freshness, and to know what *ennui* means; to have habitual joyousness, after learning how anxiety can wear the spirit out of life; to have love and wisdom watching over one, as if one was what a child is to a mother's heart, "the unconscious centre and poise of the universe"; and at the same time to know the worth of such wisdom and love; to have our life all before us, conscious of what life is and how short are the years; to find again the Eden garden, innocent of evil, after having seen how evil fills the world with mis-

ery; to be simple, after having found out the charm and the wisdom of simplicity; to have—in a word—not childhood as it is, but as it would be, if we with our present knowledge could begin again. This is what is wished for. This too, is the secret of the sympathetic touch in Gray's well-known welcome of the breeze from the school of his boyhood, that breeze that came from the happy hills, the fields beloved in vain:—

I feel the gales that from ye blow
A momentary bliss bestow,
As waving fresh their gladsome wing,
My weary soul they seem to soothe,
And, redolent of joy and youth,
To breathe a second spring.

That second spring would be boyhood with manhood's knowledge—an impossible existence, a Golden Age that never was. It was because of the grim troops of passions and diseases waiting "in the vale below," that Gray envied the boyhood that had not yet advanced to meet the strife and miseries of the world. We call that Golden Age "the happiest time," merely by contrast; we forget its small capacity for happiness, its shallow understanding of the worth of those good things that we envy; and we apostrophise it in poetry and prose, because we are condemning the after-time as unhappy, without remembering our increased capacity for happiness.

But if it be impossible to carry back to a new start in life the experience life has given us, while we are thinking with a sad fascination of that Golden Age, and feeling the "momentary bliss" of recollection, we shall not find it impossible to reverse our aspirations, and to combine with later life some part, and perhaps the best part of our young life's treasures. We yearn for those two things together—the happiness of the beginning, and the light upon it from the experience of the end. We cannot go back; why should we not gather again and bring forward with us all that can be brought from the Golden Age? Then, to some extent, our aspiration will be satisfied.

Out of that Golden Age all the best things can be picked up and carried along with us still. Surely this is some comfort to us wayfarers who must "move on!" We cannot have life over again; but it can be made to lengthen in worth by intensity of purpose, and of working, of loving. These, and not time, are the true measure of life. We envy freedom from responsibility; the child has

his tasks as we have ours; his lesson may be hard as our duty, and harder; he is happily resigned to tasks in obedience to the will of others; our buckling down to duty will bring us our playtime too. Freshness comes next. Wordsworth, after mourning that the glory and the dream were gone, acknowledged that he could receive from the meanest flower thoughts too deep for tears; so we strongly suspect that the glory and the dream were remaining, and that he saw till the last the earth "appareled in celestial light." The love of the open-air world is a great key to lifelong freshness of soul. Another key to freshness is the custom of being easily pleased. The smallest gift pleases a child; in later life, we look more at the love of the giver than at the gift; but why should not the manifold growth of small kindnesses refresh us? And how shall we get habitual joy? It is a precious treasure; the home is rich where there is one member of the household brimful of sunshine. A merry word at home is magic for brightening life; and it is some encouragement to know that of all social virtues, the habit of joyousness is the one that grows fastest by patient effort. It fosters another childlike treasure—the sense of delight in a home atmosphere of love. Let us not fear to express our tenderness in word and deed for those who share life's burdens with us, and the glow of the Golden Age will be round

the hearth again. As for simplicity, it is already the lifelong dower of many of the most gifted minds; it is almost a characteristic of the intellectual men of noblest life. Why should we use long words when short ones are kinder; why go roundabout ways when we only need openly do our best? Wonderful as it may seem, simplicity is the most imitable part of childhood. The absence of self-consciousness is the grand key to it. If we cease thinking about the effect produced upon others, who are supposed to have concentrated their attention upon our puny selves, we shall escape much heart-burning, and gradually begin to brighten our path with something of childhood's brightness. As for faith and trust, if they look higher than the roof of home, why should they not be as the child's huge trust? We should have fewer careworn looks, and the habit of joy would be easier.

There is another quality that must crown this development of the childlike character—it is sympathy—that wide and warm sympathy which knows no growing old, and which is the fruition of our childhood's eager freshness. Best of all, in picking up those old treasures that we carelessly dropped by the way when the Golden Age was ending, we may yet be, all unconsciously, very near the paradise-garden where once we walked, not knowing our good-fortune, and but half able to enjoy it.

WE CANNOT BE ALONE.

I THOUGHT to be alone,
So left the busy world with all its life,
Its joys, its griefs, its cares, its bitter strife,
And to the woods I strayed one sultry day,
Where solitude and silence would have sway;
For, oh, I longed for both! No friends craved I,
Nor useless words to speak of sympathy.
So in the grand old woods I sought relief,
Where utter loneliness and silence brief
One short hour could be known.

I thought to be alone,
But found the woods alive. Each dell and glen
As full of bustle as the haunts of men;
For there small insects chirped with perfect glee,
And leaves kept rustling in each tall old tree;
When snaps and grasshoppers rubbed aloud their wings,
And wild-birds sang, and bees were noisy things.
"Those woods have too much sound and life," I cried,
"To soothe my heart," so left its shadows wide
For other realms unknown.

I thought to be alone,
So turned my steps toward the great wide sea,
And sat upon the beach; for majesty
And solemn stillness brooded o'er the spot
Full well I knew. But, ah! I quite forgot
That ebbing tides flow never silently,
And dancing waves will murmur of the sea;
These often roll, and swell, and crash, and roar,
As madly leaps the surf against the shore,
Where silence is unknown.

Alone! No more I moan,
But turn, with tearful eyes and drooping head,
Resolved earth's busy paths I now would tread
Without a murmur. Jest, and laugh, and song
No more shall fret! I would, myself, prolong
The tumult—work, and sing, and pray,
And strive, by doing good, to drive away
The morbid gloom that solitude would crave,
Which God forbids; for feel we gay or grave,
We cannot be alone.

ESAU.

BY MARY F. A. TENCH.

"**E**SAU, Esau," calls a clear, full voice, "are you ready?"

Then comes a rapid knock at the door, and without waiting for a reply, the speaker enters.

Esau, clad in a long dressing-gown, lies lazily in one chair, with his legs extended on two others.

"I say, Baby," he drawls, between puffs of tobacco smoke, "how quite too distressingly young and active you are! You cannot expect a man of my years and infirmities to compete with you. I'm not sure that I shall go at all."

"Oh yes, you will, old man! Miss Denver will be there—she told me so this afternoon."

A slight tinge of crimson steals over Esau's bronzed cheeks, and he rises with more alacrity than one would have given him credit for a moment before.

The speakers are two officers in Her Majesty's —th regiment of Light Dragoons. The younger, Baby, is a tall, broad-shouldered man of twenty-six, with hair so flaxen, eyes so limpidly blue, and a countenance of such infantile innocence that no one in the regiment ever dreams of addressing him by his true name, which is Jack Vandeleur. Esau, four years his senior, is a strong contrast to his friend. He, too, is of goodly height; but his hair is dark, somewhat thin above the brow, and slightly marked with gray. His clearly-cut features, prominent chin, and somewhat cold gray eyes have won for him the reputation of being proud. Be that as it may, there are in London few more distinguished-looking men than Captain Beauchamp Davenport, nick-named "Esau" ten years before because of his prowess in slaying a "man-eater," which was the terror of the little villages near Lahore.

The name seemed prophetic, for some years later Esau lost his birthright, not even receiving a mess of pottage in return. A rich, handsome, heartless ward of his father's, whom the old man wished his eldest son to marry; a firm refusal on the part of Esau; a threat of disinheritance; a more complaisant younger brother; a beauty scorned, longing for revenge, and knowing

that her marriage with the younger would entail the pecuniary ruin of the elder;—these are the headings of the story; and thus it is that Harold Davenport, now a widower and childless, lives in the stately home of his forefathers, while Esau, the disinherited, sojourns in two small rooms in barracks near London. Until lately he has been, perhaps, the happier man of the two, for the interest on the ten thousand pounds, which was all that his father could leave him, was enough for his wants; but during the past few weeks things have changed for him. Before him there rises perpetually a vision of a fair, patrician face, a slender figure, a witching smile—the Honorable Blanche Denver, one of the reigning beauties of the London season. Besides face, figure, and smile, there are pretty white hands which know how to toy with a bouquet or a fan, slender feet which can dance to perfection the last new valse, and costumes that can come from no other establishment but that of Worth. Captain Davenport has succumbed to these graces, and wishes in vain for riches to lay at his idol's feet.

When the two men reach Belgrave Street, where the dance is going on, Miss Denver is, as usual, surrounded by admirers; but Esau finds more than one vacant space on her programme, whereon he is graciously permitted to inscribe his name. The fact is that she has purposely kept them free, hoping that he may come to claim them; for among all the handsome and noble-looking men she has met, there are none who can be compared with Esau, who is also the lord of the fairest heritage in the Midland Counties. At least such is her belief; for her mother, looking lately through the list of landed gentry of a year ago, before old Mr. Davenport's death, saw that his elder son was in the —th Light Dragoons; and no one has since told her that, though the elder son, he has not inherited his father's estate.

The evening passes only too quickly for Esau, and when he is in his barrack-rooms again, he takes himself bitterly to task for his folly. What business has he, a poor soldier, to dream such dreams? If he ever should marry, his wife must be a different

style of girl from this bright patrician beauty, whose milliner's bill probably reaches a higher figure than the whole of his income.

"Yes," groans poor Esau, "my wife—if I ever have one—must be a useful woman—one who can make puddings, darn socks, stitch on buttons—a homely, good sort of creature with red hands; not a little, delicate fairy like Blanche Denver."

He turns over in his narrow bed, and vows to himself that he will put an end to such folly as he has indulged in lately, and that he will never look upon Blanche Denver's witching face again.

The following afternoon, however, brings a note from her mother, asking if he and Vandeleur will join her party at the Opera that evening; she has a box, and Patti is to sing in "*Lucia di Lammermoor*." It is not in Esau's nature to refuse; and so the evening sees him at Covent Garden Theatre, beside the girl who has so quickly thrown her spells around him. Together they listen to Patti's magical voice, and watch the current of poor Lucia's anguish.

"What would you do, Miss Denver, were you in such a case—torn from the man you loved in order to be wedded to a rich suitor by force?" asks Baby, smiling.

She shakes her pretty head, but does not answer.

"Tell me!" whispers Esau, as he bends towards her.

She raises her face—so fair, so fresh, so innocent—and lets him gaze into her eyes for one moment, to see a look there that makes him forget all else save her; then her eyelids droop, her cheeks flush, her soft voice grows softer, as she murmurs:—

"I should die!"

A month passes by, during which Esau notes the days thus: "On that day I rode with her; on this I met her at the flower-show; on that other I walked with her in the Row; and at last—oh, joy! oh, triumph!—on that blessed evening she gave me a sprig of myrtle, and let her dear hand rest in mine for quite a minute!"

Then comes a shock. Lady Denver learns the truth; and it costs her a whole night's rest because that dear, delightful Captain Davenport has deceived every one so, actually passing himself off as an elder son when in reality he is nothing of the kind. It is dreadful, and such a pity, too, for he is so distinguished-looking! She might still

include him in her invitations—as a "detritmental," of course—were it not for Blanche. She cannot risk her daughter's happiness; and, poor child, she seems to like him. What is she to do? She cannot think of any excuse to pick a quarrel with Esau, and actually contemplates quitting the delights of the London season, and going for a trip to Japan, Lapland—anywhere, in fact, to put a stop to the "nonsense," although she knows too well that Blanche will have forgotten it all in a month's time.

The next day the —th Dragoons receive orders to prepare to start for Egypt. Esau is too much occupied to call at Lady Denver's until the following afternoon, and then he detects a slight difference in her manner—something indefinable, but none the less perceptible. It is early for callers, and he hopes to have at least an hour with the ladies before they go out driving—for he is a privileged visitor now. Taking his accustomed seat, he watches with a lover's eager eyes the color rising in his darling's cheeks as he makes his announcement.

Her bosom heaves slightly, her eyelids droop, as if to hide the tears she must not shed; and it is as much as he can do to refrain from taking her in his arms and holding her there in spite of all the world.

He is roused from such wild, frenzied thoughts by Lady Denver's voice, cold, hard, studiously polite.

"Ah," she says, languidly, "how fortunate for you to have the chance of seeing service! So many young men would give worlds to be in your place! You will be quite a hero on your return. Indeed, I congratulate you! How good of you to find time to call to say good-by to us, such recent acquaintances, you know. And I am quite grieved that we are obliged to go out now."

"Oh, mother! go out?" cries Blanche.

"Yes," replies Lady Denver, frowning. "I promised your aunt to call for her early to do some shopping. Captain Davenport, may I trouble you to ring the bell? I feel that I owe you many apologies for my apparent rudeness; but a promise is a promise, you know. So sorry we shall not see you at the Cedars to-night! Good-by, good-by! Come, Blanche. The victoria at once," she says to the man who answers the bell.

Mother and daughter leave the room, but not until the latter has contrived to look back at Esau, her eyes filled with tears, her lips quivering with an expression of mute

appeal that nearly drives him mad. And so he passes, pale-faced and silent, out of the gates of his paradise.

He understands now that it has not been as the comparatively penniless soldier, but as the supposed owner of the Davenport estates that he has been welcomed. Blanche's last look, however, convinces him that she is not a party to his banishment, and he determines to see her once again, only to say good-by, of course—a last good-by.

He is not included in the invitations to the Cedars at Richmond, and he understands now to whom he is indebted for the omission; but he vows he will be there, nevertheless. He knows the place well. He remembers with a heavy heart the lime-tree by the river; for there it was that Blanche gave him the sprig of myrtle—there, sitting on the rustic seat, almost hidden from sight by the drooping boughs. He will meet her there once again, to say a last farewell. Baby will manage it for him; he is going to the dance, and he will bring Blanche there just for a few minutes. This service Jack Vandeleur promises readily, being full of sympathy for his *fidus Achates*.

"Never say die, old fellow!" he says, cheerily. "If she is worth her salt, she won't say good-by to you. If she does, she will never see your equal again. As soon after twelve as possible. Ta-ta! Keep up your heart, old man!" and with a friendly pat on the back, Jack runs down the barrack stairs and jumps into his hansom.

It is long past twelve, and yet Esau still stands alone under the lime-tree. Has Jack failed? Has Lady Denver suspected, and kept guard over her daughter? He tortures himself with a hundred conflicting doubts and fears as the minutes slip by and Blanche does not come. At last there is a rustle, and a trembling figure creeps to his side. Where are his resolutions for a cold good-by, as he clasps her in his arms and sinks back upon the rustic seat?

"Don't—don't, Captain Davenport!" she implores; but even as she says it her white arms tighten round his neck, and her face is hidden upon his breast. "Oh, if you only knew!" she gasps. "Even now I am so afraid! Oh, if mamma finds me here! She watched me so, I think she must suspect something. But for that dear Mr. Vandeleur, I could never have got away. You should not have asked me; and, oh, I

cannot stay a minute!" she sobs, hysterically.

"Don't, Blanche—don't, my darling!"

"I'm not your darling!" she cries, pettishly.

"Yes, you are, my sweet; else why are here?" and he raises her face to the moonlight, and looks at it long and scrutinizingly. "You love me, Blanche?" he asks her, his voice tremulous with the depth of his emotion.

"I cannot tell—I do not know," she answers.

He holds her closer to him, and covers her face with kisses.

"Do you know now," he whispers, passionately, "my love, my darling, my idol? Do you know now?"

She only answers with a sobbing sigh, and touches his cheek caressingly with her fingers.

"My dearest, my own!" he says. "Oh, why am I a poor man? Yet, my darling, many a poorer man than I am has made his wife happy. Will you come to me? If you care as little as I do about balls, dinners and horses and carriages—if, like me, you can find your happiness simply in being with the one you love—then why should we be parted?"

His eager earnestness inspires her; for a moment, at any rate, her love equals his, and clinging closely to him, she whispers:—

"I would rather beg my bread from door to door with you, than marry any other man, were he as rich as the Rothschilds!"

He believes her; and time passes by unheeded, until Jack Vandeleur signals that there is danger; and so, with fond, faithful promises to be true while life lasts, the lovers bid each other a lingering farewell.

Months have passed by, and the scene is changed. A blazing sky is above, burning sands are beneath; the hot winds of Egypt strike with fervid heat upon the already fevered frames of the combatants reeling backwards and forwards in the struggle for victory. Sabres flash, musketry rattles, cannons roar, the wild din of battle rages around the entrenchments of Tel-el-Kebir.

Side by side are two men, one with his fair head bared and stained with his life-blood, his right arm upraised, his white face set and rigid. It is Jack Vandeleur. One moment more and his arms sink powerless to his side. With an effort he rights him-

self, then totters again, and sinking sideways, falls to the ground, and is surrounded by a score of foes. Quick as thought his companion, Beauchamp Davenport, places himself astride the prostrate form, and stands, sword in hand, rapidly thrusting and parrying; but all in vain, for hours afterward a surgeon with his assistants and an officer or two stand looking at what they believe to be two dead comrades, one lying across the body of the other.

"It was nobly done," says a young lieutenant, sadly. "I saw it, though too late. Had Davenport lived he would have had the Victoria Cross."

"He does live," answers the surgeon, who is kneeling by Esau's side with his fingers upon the prostrate man's pulse. "There is life in him still. Here—quick—have the litter ready, while some one helps me to set his broken arm. I hope he won't lose it, poor fellow; England cannot spare right arms like his."

As they raise him and place him upon the litter, he murmurs, faintly:—

"Baby, dear old boy, where are you?" then, opening his dim eyes, he sees, and, weak as he is, understands. "O Jack, my dearest friend," he almost sobs, "I would have died to save you!"

"You tried your best to do so, and nearly succeeded, too," remarks the surgeon, almost roughly, though there are tears in his eyes, and his lips are quivering under his heavy moustache. "Calm yourself, I beg of you," he goes on; but the injunction is needless, for Esau has fallen back unconscious.

Many days pass before Captain Davenport opens his eyes to the world again; he sees in his visions only the dead form of his friend and the flower-like, gold-crowned face of Blanche Denver, and of both of these he raves perpetually. Nothing seems to quiet him save the placing of one cool hand upon his brow. He fancies it is that of the woman he loves, though no two women could be more unlike than the London belle, and the calm, gentle hospital-nurse, whose only crown is the white cap of her order, whose only roses are those on her smooth, pale cheek when her patient clings to her hand with a passionate eagerness and presses it to his burning lips with fond, tender words of love.

It is weeks before Esau conquers the fever, and, weak and helpless as a child, he

comes to himself with a feeling of dim wonderment. His last glimpse of life was a blood-stained battle-field; now he sees that he is in a hospital, for there are rows of beds, each with an occupant, and at the side of one just opposite stands a slender woman, who, with tender, capable hands, is arranging the pillows beneath a sick man's head. Are those the hands that have lain so cool upon his forehead? he wonders, and wishes dreamily that she would turn, so that he may look upon her face; but she continues to lean over the opposite bed, and he hears her soft-toned replies to the questions of the wounded man. Suddenly a voice calls from the other end of the room, "Sister Ainslie!" and the tall, graceful figure in its clinging garments passes from his view; and wearily, almost angrily, he closes his eyes. When next he opens them, she is standing by his side with a plate of jelly in her hand. She has somehow divined that at last he is conscious and in want of nourishment, and, raising his head upon her arm, she feeds him almost as though he were a baby—one who a month ago was a very paladin. He feels rather foolish, and yet he acknowledges half reluctantly to himself that the situation is not altogether an unpleasant one, with Ruth Ainslie's dark eyes and winning smile and soft cheeks so close to him. These are her chief charms, for her features are not perfect, and she is beautiful only in the eyes of those who love her; but they are many. As she passes through the ward of the hospital all eyes follow her, and rough soldiers bend to kiss

"Her shadow as it falls
Upon the dark'ning walls."

As Esau lies day after day with nothing to do but think, he worries himself a good deal about Blanche. Although the lovers have agreed not to write, lest Lady Denver should discover their secret prematurely, he now feels that he must break through the rule, for doubtless his little love has learned from the newspapers that he is dangerously wounded, and is in sore trouble about him. He grows impatient of his weakness and powerlessness, as he thinks of the tears in her blue eyes, of the color paling on her fair rose-tinted cheeks in her anxiety about him.

"Sister Ainslie," he says, one day, "I must write a few lines to a friend. Could I not try with my left hand?"

"Impossible, I fear," she replies. "You do not know how weak you are. Can I—

may I"— She hesitates and blushes, for she knows that this friend is no other than the golden-haired girl of whom he raved in his delirium.

Esau looks into the clear, dark eyes above him and feels that he can trust the Sister implicitly.

"Thank you," he answers, "if you will be so kind; for there is some one who is very dear to me, whose anxiety on my account I am very desirous to relieve."

He dictates a few formal lines—formal rather because they may fall into Lady Denver's hands than because they must be written by this girl with the truthful face and honest eyes. How tender and unselfish is this Sister Ainslie; how ready to sympathize in everyone's joys and sorrows; how bright, how uncomplaining, even at the end of a long day's labor! He wonders about her a good deal, and cannot help thinking that she looks as though she ought to be making the sunshine of some English home, rather than working like a slave in a military hospital. Then dreamily he wonders how Blanche Denver would act were she compelled to earn her own bread; and try as he may, he cannot fancy the slender fingers of his darling engaged in any useful work. Ah, well, thank Heaven, there will be for her a strong, protecting arm on which to lean, a home which, though not luxurious, will be free from want! Fate has been kind to Esau, for while on his sick-bed he has learned that by the death of a distant relative he has inherited an income of two thousand a year—a small sum, it is true, compared with the princely fortune he has lost, but yet enough to make his prospect of marriage with a spoiled beauty less mad than it once seemed.

One day, opening his eyes suddenly, he sees Sister Ainslie standing by his side, a letter in her hand, directed in unformed childish characters. His heart throbs wildly, for he knows it is from Blanche. It is the first letter he has ever received from her; and, in spite of Ruth's presence, he presses it to his lips. Its contents, however, are not very satisfactory. She is so glad her dear Esau is better; she saw what the papers said, and could not enjoy the Benhams' dance for thinking of him—"those nasty papers always exaggerate things." It was sweet of him to write, but she begs he will not do so again, as she is afraid of "mamma"; and she remains his "loving

little Blanche." Then follows a postscript: "Is it not strange that your brother is staying in the same house with us? Mamma thinks him quite too charming; and, indeed, he is nice, and plays lawn-tennis beautifully, and dances like an angel. But he is not half as nice as my Esau."

Captain Davenport sighs; he might have spared some of his anxiety on Miss Denver's account, since it seems she spends her mornings in playing tennis and her evenings in dancing. Well, what else could he expect? No openly-acknowledged tie binds them, and she must act her part before the world. He kisses the words "your loving little Blanche," then smiles bitterly as he reads that his brother's dancing is like that of an "angel." Angels, he thinks—at least, earth's angels—walk through hospital wards, and have helpful hands, and low, soft voices like Ruth Ainslie's.

Esau has come home to England in a troop-ship, with many another wounded comrade. Sister Ainslie is on board, and, though still in charge of the sick, looks really in need of sick-leave herself. The cheeks that were once so pearl-like in their pallor have grown almost sallow, there are dark circles round the eyes, and there is an air of languor about her when she thinks she is unnoticed which is painful to see.

Evidently she needs change and rest; and the doctors have insisted that she must have both; so she has been granted two months' leave, which she is to spend with an invalid brother and his wife living in a little village not far from Ventnor.

Esau, as he sees her into the boat at Portsmouth, promises to run down from London shortly, to pay her a visit.

"And perhaps," he adds, "I may not come alone."

She smiles, and, if the smile is a forced one, he does not notice it as she answers:—

"If two come, there will be a double welcome."

"Thank you," he said warmly; "and sometime you will come to stay with us, Ruth?"

Unconsciously he had used her Christian name, and a faint flush, which does not look like one of anger, rises to her cheeks.

"If I can, I will come," she replies; "but my holidays as a rule are very short ones—only for a fortnight; and yet I should like to see your happiness, Captain Davenport."

"Thank you, sister! And now good-by," he says, raising her ungloved hand to his lips. "I shall not soon forget all you have done for me."

As the boat gets under way, and Ruth's pale face and slender form are lost to view, Esau is conscious of a strange vacant feeling at his heart. With a vain attempt to assume a cheerful air, he turns towards the station to catch the next train for London.

"*Standard, Telegraph, Morning Post!*" cries a boy, as Captain Davenport ensconces himself in the corner of a smoking-carriage.

"One of each!" is the eager answer, for it is a long time since he has seen a newspaper less than a week old. Half unconsciously he takes up the *Morning Post* first, and, turning to the fashionable intelligence, he comes upon the following paragraph:—

"The marriage, arranged some weeks ago, between Harold Davenport, Esq., of Davenport Hall, Loamshire, and the Honorable Blanche Denver, will take place early next month, from Denver Park, her brother's residence, where she is now staying."

A violent imprecation breaks from Esau's lips, and he mutters:—

"So this is how the tennis-playing and dancing with Harold ended! Am I not rightly named 'Esau,' seeing that my brother has supplanted me a second time?"

Since the receipt of Blanche's letter, the thought has more than once occurred to Captain Davenport that the woman who has won his love is rather a shallow creature; but, remembering how spoiled she has been, he has flattered himself that in the future she will reach a higher standard; and, above all, he loves her. If he ever doubted it, he does not do so now.

At first he absolutely writhes with torture at the thought that, while he has been nearly mad with anxiety about her, she has merely been playing with him, and is now perhaps laughing with Harold over his brother's folly. But no—it cannot be! He recalls the tender, tearful eyes, the white clinging arms, the sweet lips that assured him of her love, and he feels certain that she has been worried into this engagement by her wordly mother. He has been far away, and she had no champion; but in the future it will be different. In spite of himself, however, he is chilled by doubt, and cannot help wondering whether Blanche is indeed pure, trustworthy, steadfast, true, like—like—well, like Ruth Ainslie; and he hates him-

self because he cannot feel sufficiently confident to answer "Yes."

On arriving at his hotel, Esau sits down and writes a simple, manly letter to Miss Denver, telling her of his altered circumstances, and asking if it is indeed her wish to break the bond that held them together. "If so," he adds, "I shall be the last to ask you to do so; but, if not, you will find me in all things unchanged."

He passes a sleepless night and a wretched day before the answer arrives.

"DEAR CAPTAIN DAVENPORT: Why did you write to me? Mamma and Harold would be so angry if they knew! I am sorry if you are vexed, for I did and do like you much the best; but you know we were not really engaged, and mamma begged me so to marry! She wants to introduce Clothilde and Florence—the twins—next season, and she cannot well take out three sisters, and neither of the twins will agree to wait.

"Why did you not tell me of the two thousand a year before?—though I am not sure if I could live on so little. But I cannot change now my *trousseau* is bought, and I should have to give back Harold's presents. Do not be angry with me! I do like you best.

"Ever yours truly,

"BLANCHE DENVER."

With a bitter laugh he crushes the letter in his clenched hand. "Angry with her!" he thinks he might as well be angry with a butterfly or a humming-bird! They were never really engaged! No, they were not! Fond pressures of loving lips, and eager assurances of undying devotion constitute no engagement. "She likes me best," he laughs again, "and she would not care to go to dance the eldest of three." His love for her dies out nearly as suddenly as it was born. Who can seriously love "so weak a thing?" and he feels a bitter self-contempt as he thinks of his delusion.

After writing a few lines to Ruth in order to announce his safe arrival, in which he simply encloses the printed announcement of his brother's coming marriage, with neither note nor comment from himself, he goes out, and, having had an interview with his lawyers, saunters aimlessly about the deserted Row.

He wonders morbidly if it were for this experience that he was saved when Jack

Vandeleur fell—poor Jack, whose mother is fretting her heart out about him in her distant country home! Esau determines to go down to see her some day, and tell her how her fair-haired son died like a hero; but not yet—he cannot bear it yet.

The prospect of the Victoria Cross does not console him much. He wants no decoration for having tried to save the life of the friend who was so dear to him. Two days later he receives a letter in Ruth's clear firm handwriting, which is so different from Blanche's unformed characters. It is short, simple, and friendly; the only allusion to his trouble is in the words, "I am truly sorry for you in your sorrow; but believe one who has gone through a similar trial that this, like all other sorrows, can be lived down." That is all; nevertheless he feels that his grief has become less. She has gone through a like sorrow, and yet her pale face is calm, her life noble. He will not be less brave.

The letter cheers him, and he resolves not to degenerate into a melancholy moper merely because a worthless coquette has jilted him. The evening of that day sees him in the lonely home of Jack Vandeleur's mother, where he remains for a few days; and, though the visit is a trial to him, he feels that it has afforded consolation to the desolate woman whose only child lies far away in death's long sleep.

His stay in Gloucestershire terminated, he makes up his mind to go down to the Isle of Wight to see Ruth. He feels that, with the example of her noble unselfish life before him, he will be more of a man than if left alone to his morbid thoughts.

The next day he is established in the hotel of the small village where Mr. Ainslie lives. He finds a warm welcome accorded to him by all the family, while the children at once adopt him as their friend; and, though Ruth still looks more wan and fragile than he likes to see, yet she greets him with the sweet smile that he knows so well.

Mrs. Ainslie is a pretty though rather careworn little woman, with a soft voice and gentle manner, whilst her husband is a cultivated man about forty. He tells Esau part of his history one day, as they sit alone. He was making a fairly good income as a barrister when, owing to the results of an accident, he was struck down by partial paralysis, from which he never recovered, and was thus left with a wife and children dependent on him, and no means of support.

"Ah, I see your surprise, Davenport! You know people cannot live on air, and wonder how I obtained this pretty cottage. This, like all else I have, is Ruth's gift. She—as perhaps you do not know—is only my half-sister, and from her mother she inherited five hundred a year. This place she settled by deed of gift on me and my children. It almost breaks my heart to take it"—his voice hoarse with emotion—"especially as she will not even share the home she gave me, because her unselfishness brought upon her a deep grief which she said only hard work could cure. I thought, I hoped, that its memory had passed away; but, when I begged her yesterday to stay with us for the future, she only answered, 'Not yet—some time, perhaps. Oh, not yet!'"

Esau knows to what Mr. Ainslie alludes; he understands it all. A villain has wooed sweet Ruth whilst yet an heiress on a small scale, and when almost dowerless has rejected her; that is clear. But it is not clear why he feels a sharp pang pierce his heart because the trouble has not yet been forgotten. Why should he, Blanche Denver's discarded lover, care if Ruth Ainslie still mourns her faithless suitor?

Esau finds that in spite of Blanche's faithlessness the world, though not quite the same, is not such a very bad place. He had, after all, known very little of the girl who had bewitched, played with, and jilted him, save that she was exceedingly fair to look upon, always dressed perfectly, and had all the latest fashionable gossip at her tongue's end. Looking back dispassionately, now the glamour has passed away, he asks himself if she were half as intelligent a companion as Ruth Ainslie, with the pale face and earnest eyes, strong, self-contained, and noble, yet lacking none of the sweet charms of womanliness, tenderness, and sympathy.

He does not love Ruth; but what a charming companion she would make if she would consent to accept his esteem and regard, which is all he can offer to a wife! He wonders whether he dare ask her; she might regard it as an insult, and he cannot bear the thought of losing her friendship; and so the last evening of Ruth's holiday and his visit has come, and the words he longs to utter are not spoken.

The moon is shining as he stands beside her on the sea-shore, whilst two of the young Ainslies are playing at a distance; for, though the month is February, yet in

this sheltered, favored spot the air is warm. The children run home at last. "Good-night, Auntie Ruth and Uncle Esau!" they call out as they pass. The girl feels a burning flush rise to her cheeks; she hopes Captain Davenport has not heard the words. But he has. He takes her hand in his, whispering softly:—

"You have heard the title they have given me; say is it possible, Ruth?"

Her head is bowed as she answers slowly:—

"It is quite impossible, Captain Davenport."

"I feared so," he says, sighing and liberating her hand; "but you will let it make no difference in our friendship, sister?"

"It shall make no difference in our friendship, brother," she replied; and, placing her hand upon his arm, they walk in silence far away along the moon-lit beach.

Esau sees her safely to the hospital next day, receiving permission, as long as his sick-leave lasts, to call every Thursday afternoon, on which day she has a few hours' leisure.

A year has nearly past, and for well-nigh six months Esau has seen nothing of Ruth, as his regiment is quartered in the north of England; but he hears from her now and then. His brother officers find him strangely altered. He misses Jack Vandeleur—misses him terribly; and the remembrance of the woman he once loved has left a bitter sting behind.

Something else, however, has changed Esau. He misses more than he cares to acknowledge to himself the Thursday afternoon spent in Ruth's society. The friendly greeting that awaited him at the hospital, the quiet walk, the few hours spent in a museum or picture-gallery, stand out distinctly in his memory. The remembrance of the genial companionship of a woman whose mirth never degenerated into frivolity, whose earnestness was never prosy, whose voice was music, whose pure face was joy to behold, is very dear to him. He had never felt more than friendship for her; as for love, he will never again embark on that stormy sea; still he feels a strange longing to meet Ruth Ainslie again.

He hears she is to have a holiday in January; so he applies for leave; and, on being granted it, goes down unannounced to the Isle of Wight.

It is still early in the afternoon when he arrives at his old quarters at the "Ship" hotel; and an hour afterwards, walking towards Mr. Ainslie's house, he meets that gentleman and his wife out driving, and receives a warm welcome from them.

"We shall be back in an hour or so. Davenport," says Mr. Ainslie, "so go on. The children are all out, but you will find Ruth at home."

Esau goes on towards the house he knows so well, crosses the small garden, and, finding the door open, enters without knocking. Ruth is in the drawing-room alone, and, for a wonder, unoccupied. She is standing by the fire, her arm upon the mantelpiece, her head resting on her hand. Her back is towards Esau, but, from her weary attitude, he can almost fancy she has been crying. Ruth crying—she who has always a bright smile for others, she who bears everyone's burden and receives no help in bearing her own!

For one who is "only a friend," his heart beats with a strange violence; and, stranger still, he feels that he would give all he possesses to take her to his heart and comfort her. Oh, why did she say "impossible"?

Blind fool that he has been! He knows now that the hasty, unreasoning fancy he once felt for the arch-coquette Blanche Denver was as moonlight unto sunlight and as water unto wine, in comparison with the mighty passion of undying love which the woman before him had roused in his breast.

"Ruth!" he said softly; and she turns towards him with an expression in her eyes which he has never seen there before. Is he mad! Is it possible that she loves him? He steps nearer to her, stretching out his arms. "Ruth—my Ruth—come to me!" he implores; and the next moment Ruth's arms are twined around his neck, and he is showering kisses upon Ruth's face.

"Is it possible, my love?" he says. "Oh, you have cheated me out of a year's happiness? Or is it only absence which has taught you that you care for me?"

"It is more than possible; it is certain—it is true," she whispers. "I did not believe that you really loved me last year, Esau; I thought it was only pique or"—

"Or—go on, Ruth! Did you love me then—did you—did you? Nay, you must tell me. I shall not let you go until you do!"

She raises her steadfast eyes, a faint blush stealing over her face.

"I loved you almost from the very first, Esau, when you lay helpless as a child in my care, and they told me you had been willing to lay down your life for your friend—you were my hero from the first, as you shall be to the last! Are you satisfied now, tyrant?"

He kissed her forehead reverently, then raises his head and thanks Heaven that, wronged, disinherited, deceived as he has been, there has yet been kept in store for him the rich gift of a pure, good woman's love.

SUMMER.

BY M. M.

SUMMER has come in her full dress arrayed,
And where did you say she so long had stayed?
She has been to the south for her Tyrian dyes;
The warmth of the sun in her color lies.

For like the wise king of the olden time,
She gathers her treasures from every clime;
Though ne'er was he, in his richest array,
Bedecked as young Summer is to-day.

In the green-room of Nature she tarries awhile,
To dress in the freshest, the latest new style.

Her robe is of blossoms, so pink and so white!
Her pearls shine fair in their dewy light;

While wreaths of wild roses her hair adorn,
And a daisy-chain on her neck is worn;
Her singers are round her on bush and in tree,
And the air is filled with their melody.

She comes to the front, 'mid the footlights fair,
Which gleam in the grasses everywhere.
We'll go forth to meet her with dance and with song,
For Summer is queen, though her reign is not long.

THE VERY ECCENTRIC MR. McFLATHER.

BY N. P. DARLING.

IT is now nearly five months since I first went to board with the Widow Blozzom. Doctor Jagers had one front room up the first flight, and I took the other, with a small bedroom leading out of it; and I furnished them myself, and the doctor did the same. We were the widow's only boarders—she had never kept but two—and we paid a good round sum, and lived well and quietly. Besides, there was something about the widow, or her arrangements, that made one forget he was in a boarding-house; made one feel perfectly at home, and at liberty to enjoy himself in his own way. And there was no fashionable young lady boarder, practicing on the piano in the parlor, while the sentimental tailor played on a cracked clarionet in the attic. And, better than all, the widow showed no disposition to fall in love with her boarders, which was the more singular from the fact that she had already been married twice, and was even now a young and charming woman, eminently

qualified to make home happy and a husband blessed.

"There is one thing that you must beware of," said the widow, as she showed me to my room on the day of my arrival at her house.

"And what is that, pray?"

"Of falling in love with the young lady opposite. I've never had a boarder yet that did not lose his heart to her. Even Doctor Jagers has"—

"Now, Mrs. Blozzom, be careful," said the doctor, as he followed us into the room, "and don't make the case worse than it is."

"But you said that you admired her," said the widow, with a roguish smile.

"Yes; and how could I help admiring her face, it's so very handsome? But I might not admire the woman, if I had the good fortune to be acquainted with her. See, there she is, Mr. Jojinx; judge for yourself if she is not beautiful."

I looked across the street; and there, at

one of the front windows of the house directly opposite, sat a most beautiful woman. Hers was really a charming face.

She was a *blonde*—that is, to all appearance. Young ladies have become so addicted to bleaching, pearl-powdering, etc., that I don't generally feel inclined to stake much, if anything, on their complexions; but I think that this lady was naturally a *blonde*; and she seemed to be of medium size, and was dressed richly and in good taste.

"Well?" queried the doctor.

"'Tis a very beautiful picture," I replied.

"Yes, just such a picture as I like to look at."

"Well, and who is the young lady?" I asked.

"Oh, bless you!" cried Mrs. Blozzom, "that's what we don't know; that is what makes her more charming still. We suppose that she is Mr. McFlather's daughter, but she may be his wife."

"And who is Mr. McFlather?"

"The gentleman who owns the house."

"He's rather eccentric, I fancy," said the doctor, "though I don't really know anything about him. No one in this vicinity claims to be acquainted with him, or his family, which seems to be quite large, although none of them, except Mr. McFlather and the young lady whom we take to be his daughter are ever seen outside the house. He is probably a man of property, as he certainly isn't engaged in any kind of business, and he isn't a man to live on air. There is a hint of roast beef and plum pudding about his person, and his jolly red nose reflects the color of their generous wines, I fancy."

"But their servants"——

"They only have one, an old woman, who knows better than to tell tales out of school, even if there were anything to tell, of which we are not sure, although I should like to know whether the young lady is Mr. McFlather's wife or daughter."

"Snodgrass tried to find that out, I believe," the doctor observed, with a smile.

"Oh, yes," returned the widow. "Poor Mr. Snodgrass! He was dreadfully in love with the young lady. He occupied this room of yours, Mr. Jojinx, and he tried in all manner of ways to make Mr. McFlather's acquaintance. I told him that he'd better find out whether the lady was married or not, before he wasted any more affection up-

on her. Mr. Snodgrass snatched his hat when I said this, and ran out into the street. It was in the evening, and the gas had just been lighted in the parlor over the way, and the lady was sitting just where she is now; and the first person that he encountered was the old woman, their maid of all work. Mr. Snodgrass slipped some money into her hand, and then asked her if the beautiful lady at the window were Mr. McFlather's wife. 'Wife!' cried the old woman, 'wife! why that's his grandmother!' And then laughed in the young man's face, and ran into the house."

"The old lady is probably insane, or foolish," said the doctor.

"Well, then I won't trouble her; and as to the young lady, why, I hope she won't compel me to love her; and meantime, I can sit and admire her beautiful face as much as I choose, just the same as the doctor does."

"Only be sure and keep heart-whole, just as I do," said he, turning to leave the room.

"We don't know positively that you have kept so," remarked Mrs. Blozzom, following him out of the door, and closing it behind her.

Well, whether he had or not, for the first two weeks afterwards I never heard him mention the name of McFlather, and if he were really smitten with the young lady's charms, as the widow would have made me believe, he kept it to himself.

Meantime I saw nothing of Mr. McFlather. To be sure, I was generally at my place of business during the day, and did not return until evening. Consequently there was little chance of my meeting him.

I confess that I was somewhat interested in the young lady. The mystery that surrounded her would have made her interesting, even if she had not been handsome. But I always was interested in pretty women, and this one was more than pretty.

And so it was quite natural that in returning from the office one evening (it was rather late, and the McFlather's parlor was illuminated), that I should cross the street from Mrs. Blozzom's for the purpose of getting a nearer view of the woman who nearly drove poor Snodgrass crazy, though probably quite unconscious herself of the ruin she was working in a fellow creature's breast.

As there was no one on the street but myself, and I knew that I could not be seen from within, I advanced boldly across the street, and stopped directly in front of the window.

I could see that there were several persons in the room. One, an old gentleman, with a long white beard sat near the young lady, and seemed to be looking at her, though he was not talking, for I noticed that his lips did not move. Beyond him was an old lady, and her eyes were fixed upon the old gentleman, but still she did not speak. Seated at the table in the centre of the room, was a young man, apparently about thirty years of age, engaged in reading from a large volume which lay on the table before him, but he must have been reading to himself for his lips did not move. On the opposite side of the table from the young man, sat another woman, probably about forty-five years of age, whom I took to be the mother of the young lady at the window, as I thought I could detect a family resemblance between them. She was reading also, but evidently to herself.

Having thus taken a survey of every person in the room, I once more turned my attention to the young lady at the window. I gazed enraptured upon the beautiful countenance. There was something inexpressibly sweet about it. Its expression was angelic, and as I gazed I ceased to wonder at the infatuation of poor Snodgrass. It reminded me of the faces I have seen in my dreams (after partaking of a hearty supper!)

"A pure, transparent, pale, yet radiant face,
Like to a lighted alabaster vase,"

as Byron says, in describing one of his heroines. (I quote from memory.) I could feast my eyes on that beautiful countenance forever, it seemed to me. I was entranced. I forgot where I was—everything, but—

"That's my grandmother."

The charm was dissolved. I turned suddenly, and found a spherically formed gentleman, with a nose as red as Bardolph's, standing beside me. I felt a strong inclination to run. It isn't pleasant to be caught playing Peeping Tom, but when you are fairly caught, the best way is to put on a bold face, and march off, with colors flying. Besides, it was none of this globular gentleman's business what I had been doing, or at least I thought so, and therefore I touched my hat and said:—

"What did you observe, my dear sir?"

"I said that was my grandmother."

"Oh, ho! Then you are—" (I never felt so weak in the joints of my lower limbs in all my life) "you are Mr. McFlather?"

"I am. And you are"——

"My name is Jojinx, Wellington Jojinx, at your service," taking off my hat and bowing low.

"It is, eh? Well, Mr. Jojinx, allow me to inform you that it is infernally impolite to stand gaping into a gentleman's parlor window." And without another word, he waddled up the steps, and went into the house, leaving me completely overwhelmed with confusion. As soon as I could recover the use of my limbs I dashed across the street, and throwing open Mrs. Blozzom's door, I rushed up-stairs to my room, where I flung myself into a chair, and tried to collect my faculties sufficiently to remember what had passed.

"His grandmother! Why, he must be insane as well as the old woman that lives with him; and I shouldn't wonder if the lady whom he persists in his grandmother, was insane also," I remarked, confidentially, to Jojinx.

I was forcibly reminded of those beautiful but touching lines from *Mother Goose*, commencing:—

"There was a mad man, and he had a mad wife," etc.

I don't remember them all, but I recollect that the whole family were infected, and even the horse was as mad as his master.

What if those people whom I had seen in Mr. McFlather's parlor were a set of wild lunatics, who with "method in their madness" had banded themselves together for mutual protection? The thought itself was maddening; but upon rising and going to the window, one glance at that sweet face was sufficient to assure me that whatever Mr. McFlather and the antique lady of the kitchen were, she, at least, was "all my fancy painted her."

While I sat by the window, looking across the street, I saw Mr. McFlather enter the parlor opposite. He crossed the room to where the young lady sat, and bending down, appeared to be talking with her. Then he approached the window, and closed the shutters. Well, he might have done that before, and saved me the heartache; but perhaps he wasn't aware what a dangerous beauty his grandmother was.

For several days the inside shutters at Mr. McFlather parlor windows remained closed. Doctor Jagers remarked it, and spoke of it one morning while we were at breakfast.

"Perhaps the family are out of town," observed Mrs. Blozzom.

"No, I saw Mr. McFlather last night, and the beautiful young lady was with him," said the doctor.

I didn't tell them of my encountering the McFlather. I wasn't proud of having made that gentleman's acquaintance in the manner that I had, and so I kept it to myself.

"For a wonder," said the widow, "Mr. Jojinx seems to take but little interest in this rather mysterious family."

"I don't know that," returned the doctor. "Mr. Jojinx is a very quiet young man, but I fear that his heart is soft, and I shall not be surprised if he breaks out like poor Snodgrass before long."

"There's many a true word spoken in jest, doctor," I returned, laughing; "but when I really fall in love, it won't be with a woman whom I have only seen through plate glass. But I leave town to-day, to spend a fortnight in the country, among the rustic beauties of the town of Bonham."

"Well, if I make Mr. McFlather's acquaintance while you are away, I shall be happy to introduce you, upon your return," said the doctor.

And so we parted. The doctor went down to his office, and I went to the railroad station, intending to take the first train out to Bonham.

I walked into the depot, stepped up to the office, bought my ticket, turned around and confronted Mr. McFlather.

"Eh, Mr. Jojinx!"

"Ah, good-morning, sir," said I; "going out of town?"

"No, sir," he replied; and then turning to the ticket agent, I heard him say, "One for Bonham."

I slipped aside, not feeling at all at my ease in Mr. McFlather's company, remembering how he had caught me only a few evenings before. But what should he tell me that he was not going out of town for, and at the same time ask for a ticket for Bonham? "It must be for some member of his family—perhaps his daughter, wife, or grandmother, whoever that young lady is. I'll go into the car and wait," thought I. "If it is the young lady, perhaps I may have an opportunity to make her acquaintance."

It was as I hoped. Every seat in the car, except one, was taken, and I hastened to secure it.

Presently I saw Mr. McFlather come out of the ladies' room, and oh, roses of Eden!

she was hanging on his arm. He came as far as the gate with her, then stopped, and kissing her, bade her good-by, and she came into the car alone.

This was my opportunity, but I let her satisfy herself first that there was no seat unoccupied, and then I arose and offered her the vacant place beside me.

She accepted it with thanks and a smile that would have melted butter. She only had three large bundles and one handbox with her, and while we were disposing of these, I aired two or three of my best jokes, and then we bumped our heads together, while we were stowing the handbox under the seat. Well, she laughed at my jokes, and anointed my forehead with cologne water, a small bottle of which she carried in her reticule; and by this time we were excellent friends, and she said that she felt just as though she had known me a year.

"But for all that," said I, "you don't know me so well as I do you, Miss McFlather."

"Why, how did you know my name?"

"Oh, I've seen you several times. You are going out to Bonham now, and I am too."

"Oh, you live there, then, and you've seen me at my aunt's?"

"No. I have seen you at your own home, in the city."

"But I don't think I ever saw you Mr.—"

"Jojinx."

"I'm very little acquainted in the city, Mr. Jojinx. You are acquainted with my father, perhaps."

"I have met him," I replied.

"You know, then, he is rather peculiar."

"Yes."

"He's very eccentric, indeed."

"I should think so. I was passing your house one evening, and I saw you sitting at the window, and just then your father stepped up behind me, and said he, 'That is my grandmother!'"

"And was it I?" she asked, smiling.

"Why, of course it was."

"Oh, he's a funny man; but you'll think I'm a strange young lady to be telling you all about my father before I've known you half an hour, and so I'm going to ask you whom you are going to see in Bonham."

"I'm going out to Uncle Ben's, and I'm going to stay a fortnight; during that time I shall try to see you every day."

"I thank you very much for your infor-

mation, Mr. Jojinx, but perhaps it would be worth more to me if I knew who your Uncle Ben is. Probably he is known by some other name in Bonham, or is he uncle to everybody in town?" said she, with a roguish smile.

"Oh, I beg your pardon," I returned. "The Uncle Ben that I refer to, is known in Bonham as Mr. Benjamin Banger, and he has a daughter about your age."

"Nellie Banger. Oh, I'm well acquainted with her; and you are her cousin?"

"Yes."

"Well, then I think I shall like you pretty well, Mr. Jojinx."

"And you'll allow me to call and see you, when you get to Bonham?"

"Yes, if you bring Nellie with you."

"Not otherwise?"

"No, for Aunt Craddle has a horror of young men from the city."

And so I promised to bring Nellie with me; and during the rest of the ride to Bonham, I endeavored to make myself as agreeable as possible, and the time passed away so swiftly, that when we arrived at our journey's end, we both remarked that we had never traveled half so fast before.

I should like to linger over the memory of those two weeks which I spent in Bonham. I don't think I was ever happier for fourteen days in succession. There was something about the society of Miss McFlather, or Almira, as I soon learned to call her, that was very exhilarating to me. Was it love? I rather think it was.

The last day of my stay was the happiest of all, because on that day, in answer to a question that I had been revolving in my mind for two weeks, Almira answered "yes."

Yes, she loved me, but when I asked her if she would be my own, she referred me to papa.

"Oh, he never'll give his consent, my dear," said I.

"But I'll make him. He's rather queer, and I know he would rather not have me marry, but I can coax him. I shall stay here a week or two longer, but I'll write to you every day, Wellington, and you must be sure to write to me as often, because if you don't I shall be jealous of the widow Blozom, and perhaps I'll marry Doctor Jaggers to spite you."

"But I don't think your father likes me, Almira."

"Oh, but he will when I tell him how much I love you," and she gave me a kiss directly under my mustache; "but you had better not say anything to him about this until I come. He'll be furious enough, any way."

And this is the way I became Almira McFlather's accepted lover. I haven't entered into particulars. I haven't told you of the strolls by moonlight, the rides by daylight, and our courting in Aunt Craddle's parlor by very dim lamplight. I haven't told you these things, because I thought it just as well to leave them to your imagination, which I know is lively. You can picture it all to your mind's eye, if you will only please to remember that I do my courting just like other people, except that I condense it more, as I have proved by the fact that I performed all my wooing in two weeks, which, although not "the best on record," is very fair, considering my "training."

I returned to the city, and for two weeks I was in constant communication with my Almira. In the last letter that she wrote me, she said that I must not call upon her until she let me know that she was ready to receive me.

"Father is such a funny man," she wrote, "that he never allows anyone to enter the house except his own family; and you can't expect to be admitted, until I have coaxed him to give his consent to our union."

"Well," thought I, "if that is what she calls being a funny man, I should prefer a more serious gentleman for a father-in-law."

One, two, three days I waited for a word from my beloved, but none came, and whether she had returned to the city or not, I had no means of knowing.

The fourth morning dawned. I felt too miserable to go down to the office, and I determined to remain in my room, and wait for an opportunity to speak with the old woman, who might be able to give me some information concerning my love.

Hour after hour passed away. I was still at my post, watching the house. At last, just as the clock struck eleven, some one opened the shutters in Mr. McFlather's parlor, and behold, sitting there by the window where I had first seen her, was the idol of my heart.

"That is the signal," I cried. "But hold! Mr. McFlather is just coming out of the house. I will wait until he is gone."

I waited until he was out of sight, and then taking my hat I rushed down-stairs,

and was going out of the front door when I encountered Mrs. Blozzom in the hall.

"Why, I thought you were sick this morning, Mr. Jojinx!" said she.

"Oh, I'm better now—quite recovered, in fact;" and I threw open the door and walked out, to find Doctor Jagers just coming up the steps.

"Bless me!" cried the doctor, "I was just coming up to give you some powders."

"I'm quite well, I thank you—quite well," and I ran across the street.

"Why, he's worse than Snodgrass," I heard the doctor say, as I opened Mr. McFlather's door and went in. "He's going to storm the castle!"

It was only a step from the hall door into the parlor. There was no one to hinder my progress, not even the mad old woman. I opened the parlor door and sprang to Almira's side. I threw my arms around her, and pressed my burning lips to her marble brow.

"O Almira, my darling, my darling! Bless me, *how cold your nose is!*" And I started back in alarm.

"Ha, ha, ha! Hanged if that Jojinx isn't making love to my grandmother, Almira."

"O Wellington, Wellington!" and the *real* Almira rushed into my arms.

"Blucher, I should think," growled McFlather, coming forward. "I say, Mr. Jojinx, I'd like to have you explain yourself. If you think you're going to make love to all my female relations" —

"Oh, but father, I *do* love him so," cried Almira, turning from me to throw her arms around her father's neck.

"But dang it, he's been making love to my grandmother, my dear."

"But he didn't know who it was, and you know we look very much alike." And then she went on to tell him what a very nice young man I was, and how very much she loved me, and how that she never could be happy without me, until at last the old gentleman became resigned.

"Well, well," said he, "what are you going to do with this nice young man?"

"I want to marry him," she answered, with a tear in one eye and a smile in the other.

"Well, then, I suppose I shall have to let you, my dear"; and he gave her a kiss.

"And now, Mr. McFlather, if you will be kind enough to explain to me why you call this statue your grandmother, it will gratify me very much," said I, after we had shaken hands.

"Why, as you are coming into the family, I've no objections to letting you into the secret. You may have read in some of the papers, lately, that a certain person—I think his name isn't given—living in Grenoble, in France, has invented a liquid, the peculiar properties of which are to turn any substance that is placed in it into stone, after a certain time."

"Yes, I remember reading that."

"Well, you will be surprised when I inform you that my great-grandfather invented a liquid similar to this, although vastly superior, nearly one hundred and fifty years ago, and it has been used in our family ever since!"

"Good heavens! and you intend to petrify me if I marry into your family, I suppose?"

"Unless you outlive me. In that case you will petrify me," replied Mr. McFlather. "You will notice that this is really a superior article, Mr. Jojinx, when compared with the Frenchman's. You see that the face retains its natural color and the eye its expression. If you wish to be *handed down* to posterity, this is really a fine opening for a young man."

I shuddered; but just then Almira laid her hand on my arm. I clasped her to my breast.

"Petrify me thus!" I cried.

"No; we'll have a wedding first," said Almira.

And we did; and Mrs. Blozzom was there, and so was Doctor Jagers, besides all the relatives of both families; and we had a very pleasant time, which was enjoyed by all, not even excepting the eccentric Mr. McFlather, who was so much pleased with the charming Mrs. Blozzom that I am afraid he will offer her his heart and hand before I can finish this story, if I do not draw it to a close immediately. And so, kind reader, adieu.

WHEN THE COWS COME HOME.

BY W. M. HAZELTINE.

WHEN the quiet hour of evening is grown nigh,
I love to sit me down and dream
Here by this pearly, surging stream,
And hear the humdrum tinkle, tinkle,
When the stars begin to twinkle
In the sky;
And to feel I need not roam
From my old, familiar home,
From that merry tinkle, tinkle,
When the cows come lowing home.

And the water keeps a-singing all in tune,
And it lulls my tired head to quiet rest,
And seems to drive the sorrow from my breast,
With the merry plunk and tinkle,
With the wavering tinkle, tinkle,
Down the road;
Rest and pleasure fill my heart,
For I know I need not part
From the humdrum tinkle, tinkle,
When the cows come lowing home.

Boston, 1888.

And the birds that twitter softly in the trees
Bring memories of joy
From the past, when I, a boy,
Heard the same soft tinkle, tinkle,
Saw these same stars twinkle, twinkle,
In the sky;
And they help to lead the way
For memories that come to-day
With the merry tinkle, tinkle,
When the cows come lowing home.

I heard the cattle lowing at the bars,
Now I hear them passing on,
And I know that they have gone
By the merry plunk and tinkle,
By the wavering tinkle, tinkle,
Up the road;
And the sweetest far of all,
In the wood or in the hall,
Is the music in that tinkle
When the cows come lowing home.

HUSHED UP.

BY LAURA LEEDS.

A TALL, solemn-looking, red brick house, many-windowed, the lowest of the windows closely veiled by wire blinds, high and impenetrable, of deepest blue, the upper ones as jealously guarded by folds of muslin, starched and snowy; a massive front door, decorated with a knocker and handle of cold, gleaming brass, and approached by three stone steps, immaculately white; the edifice itself, standing back from the wide, grimy road, holding aloof, as it were, from the noise and bustle, and viewing the world from behind two tall iron gates, their stone posts supporting rampant griffins with upraised paws, and leering, uncouth faces. Such was Chapone House; and within its frowning walls every branch of polite learning considered necessary for the well-being and ultimate advantage of feminine youth in the earlier part of the present century was carefully imparted to about thirty victims, ranging between the ages of six and sixteen, and placed, during this all-important stage of their career, away from the fostering care of parents and guardians, beneath the watchful eyes, the

irreproachable *regime* of the Misses Flight.

The school stood—for the house has long since been pulled down—in the old-fashioned suburb of Hackney. Earlier in the century, years ago, there were more such old-world dwellings to be found in the outlying districts of smoky London than there are at present. Then, too, wealthy denizens of Leyton, Walthamstow, Snarbrook, and Lea Bridge, wives of men who amassed large fortunes in the great city, were wont to stop their carriages at the Misses Flight's door, and there deposit a weeping sacrifice, with a new trunk, and loaded with propitiatory gifts in the shape of cakes and oranges, who, with many tears and injunctions, was entreated to be a good girl, and write home once a week, and bring back a prize at Christmas to astonish "papa."

It was Christmas Eve—a damp, mild, unreasonable Christmas. Four days before Chapone House had been a scene of unusual bustle, of suppressed, well-bred excitement. Cabs and carriages had passed incessantly through the great iron gates, and many

boxes, generally swathed in neat white covers and bound with scarlet braid, had been carried down the wide, shallow-stepped staircase, and across the lofty black-and-white hall by red-faced, jolly-looking men in shirt-sleeves.

There had been thirty girls, big and little, all starting for home with beaming faces and hearts beating high with expectations of pleasure to come—thirty “good-bys” to be said to the eldest Miss Flight, whose business it was to stand at the great drawing-room door, erect in black silk and redolent of lavender-water, to receive the adieux of her pupils.

Thirty? Alas, there had been but twenty-nine! for Hester Tredwin, who stood idly looking out over the blue window-blinds, with her pale face and curly head pressed close to the misty pane, had no home or friends to go to, and had consequently been left behind.

To be sure, she too would be leaving the shelter of Chapone House in a week—leaving it never to return; but then it was only to exchange one form of slavery for another—to abandon the post of pupil-teacher and general drudge, which had been her position for years in the Misses Flight's establishment, and take upon herself instead the duties of useful companion to a single lady of eccentric habits and independent means. The change did not seem to promise much for the future; still it was a change; and, for the first time since that far-away day when Hester, a tiny, forlorn creature of seven years, had been intrusted by a bachelor uncle, her sole living relative, to the Misses Flight's care, Hester Tredwin had been able without a tear or a sigh to see her schoolfellows depart.

Hester, who had just completed her eighteenth year, was undeniably a most beautiful girl. In all Chapone House there was no petted daughter of sleek alderman or city knight to compare with her, no silk-clad darling of wealthy parents whom Hester, in her shabby black gown, did not cast hopelessly into the shade. Only Heaven knew from what dead-and-gone Tredwin the girl had inherited the charm of face and manner that was undoubtedly hers. All she knew about herself amounted to little more than that her grandmother had been a Frenchwoman and a beauty. It was to her, perhaps, rather than to the frail young mother who had died in giving her birth,

that Hester owed her delicate loveliness, her unstudied grace.

“Hester Tredwin may be only a beggar, but she looks like a queen!” had been the verdict pronounced on the Misses Flight's pupil-teacher by Fanny Fowler's eldest brother on one never-to-be-forgotten occasion, when Miss Fowler, whose father was something very important in the city, had succeeded in wheedling a holiday out of the schoolmistresses for their drudge, and had carried her off for a day and night to a fine old house at Twickenham, where there were a dance and charades, and where Hester, for the first time in her life, had made her appearance in a white muslin gown belonging to the enthusiastic Fanny, with a white rose-bud pinned amid her soft rings of chestnut hair, according to the fashion of the day.

Some one else, too, beside honest John Fowler had found out that Miss Tredwin looked like a queen on that occasion. Captain Sefton,—the Gilbert Sefton who had run through two or three fortunes,—who had come down to Twickenham from town just to look in at the Fowlers' dance, had paid more attention to Hester than to any other woman in the room, and had declared that in five years' time she would be able to hold her own against any London beauty. He had not avowed his opinions to Hester herself, knowing better than to scare her with any such coarse flattery; but he had contrived that she should learn, in a sufficiently roundabout way not to offend her innate good taste, the impression she had made on him; and Hester had learnt it as he had intended, and had dreamed incessantly of the dark, handsome face, and the low, clear voice that had so fascinated her during the one evening's perfect happiness that her short, sad life had ever known.

Even now, as she stood at the schoolroom window on this Christmas Eve, Gilbert Sefton was in her thoughts. A letter which clinched her engagement as useful companion to Miss Carruthers of Combe Manor, and which had just been handed to her by Miss Amelia Flight, was held loosely between her slim, pink-tipped fingers.

“Let Miss Tredwin meet me at Paddington at twelve o'clock, next Wednesday,” thus ran the letter, “and she can travel down with me to Combe, which will save my sending to meet her at the station after-

wards. I rely so entirely on your good judgment that I do not feel a personal interview with the young woman is a necessity; at the same time you will, of course, fully explain to her the duties of her situation, and give her fully to understand that any lightness or frivolity of conduct, any deviation from the strictest plainness of attire, will meet with disapprobation from me, and lead to her ultimate dismissal."

Thus Miss Carruthers. It was not a pleasant letter; it held out no tempting prospect. To Hester, pining for happiness, for all the natural pleasures and delights of youth, it seemed a very death-knell to every hope; an irrevocable decree that her life was never to be passed in pleasant places.

"It will be like this—no better; worse, indeed, for here, at any rate, I have companions of my own age," she mused, bitterly.

At that moment an unusual object in the short carriage-drive leading to the house attracted her attention. An organ-grinder, with all the boldness and temerity peculiar to his class, had actually dared to invade the Misses Flight's sacred territory, and was just beginning to evoke the well-known strains of "*Ah, che la morte*" from his feeble, wheezing instrument only a few feet from the window where Hester stood.

He was a tall man, differing in this respect from the generality of itinerant foreign musicians of his kind, but in everything else betraying unmistakably his Savoyard origin. His peaked hat, in which was rakishly stuck one draggled peacock's plume, was slouched completely over the upper part of his face, so that only the long, drooping ends of a dark mustache were visible; his loose jacket, decorated with tarnished embroidery, was open at the neck just sufficiently to afford a glimpse of muscular brown throat and loose, white shirt-collar. One lean, brown hand turned mechanically the handle of the shabby old organ, the other caressed the indispensable monkey, which, clad in coat and cap, clung for protection to its master's brawny shoulder.

Hester watched with interest. The plaintive notes of the tender tune seemed to accord with her own thoughts. "*Ad-dio, Le-o-nora!*" gasped the organ; "*Ad-dio, life, light and hope!*" the girl's heart echoed mournfully. The very monkey had something forlornly pathetic in its funny,

puckered features as it held out a tiny black paw towards the pale face at the window.

All animals were irresistible to Hester; she would have shared her last crust with the veriest cur in existence, had it but glanced hungrily in her direction. She happened to have a few stray half-pence jingling in her pocket. Throwing a black worsted shawl over her head and shoulders, she stole out of the empty schoolroom, and, opening the big front-door, ran down the carriage-drive to inspect the monkey.

There was little fear of her movements being observed, for the Misses Flight were all deeply immersed in their own occupations, the eldest engaged in abstruse calculations connected with the school accounts, the two younger busy with the mysteries of the toilet consequent on their acceptance of an invitation to a tea and card party at a neighbor's house.

A thin, drizzling mist was just beginning to fall as the girl ran out into the December twilight, and it was this, probably, that caused the Savoyard to step back a pace or two behind the friendly shelter of the dark evergreens, as she advanced towards him.

"The signorina likes monkeys, I see!" he remarked presently, after a pause of a few seconds, during which Hester was too busy coaxing the animal to take a biscuit from her hands to pay much heed to its owner. As he spoke, he doffed his felt hat, and stood with head uncovered before the girl.

Hester uttered a low cry, while the fragment of biscuit she held dropped from her fingers. She, too, would have fallen to the ground had not the wandering musician seized her arm and drawn her with him behind some tall bushes which completely screened them from view.

"Why, Hester," said Gilbert Sefton, half laughingly, half reproachfully, "don't you know me? Didn't I tell you I should come down to the Misses Flight's and wish you a merry Christmas by hook or crook? And haven't you a word to say to me now I am here? You are a little pleased to see me, are you not?"

With the tender, caressing manner habitual with him towards all women, he bent his handsome head over the startled girl; but Hester Tredwin drew herself away from his encircling arm and stood erect, grasping a laurel bough in one hand—a very dauntless, indignant little figure, indeed.

"I don't see how you could expect me to know you in such a dress, Captain Sefton," she replied, as coolly as her trembling voice and wildly-beating heart would allow. "When I told you it would be impossible for you to see and to speak to me here, of course I never dreamt of your masquerading in this fashion. It is very dangerous and very wrong. What would become of me if either of the mistresses came out and found me here?"

Her lip quivered as she spoke; after all, she was little more than a child, with a child's dread of a scolding. And then, too, it seemed so hard to speak coldly to this man who, according to her romantic school-girl notions, was ready to turn himself into a very hero of romance for her sake.

Her apparent coolness acted as the strongest possible stimulus to Gilbert Sefton's admiration.

"You are a hard-hearted little monster, Hester!" he exclaimed, resentfully, replacing his hat and making a feint of readjusting the organ, as though about to depart. "After all the trouble I have taken and the risks I have run, to say nothing of paying a fortune to one of these grinding fellows to lend me his organ, you have actually not a word to say to me! My efforts are all wasted, it appears."

He looked profoundly melancholy and dejected as he spoke, and Hester melted at once; she little guessed that that interview with her was the subject of a heavy bet between Gilbert Sefton and some of his least scrupulous friends, and that within a stone's throw of the great iron gates there was at that moment a hired cab waiting to whirl off the supposed organ-grinder at any minute to his luxurious quarters in Piccadilly, where an unlimited supply of champagne would celebrate the success of his expedition to Hackney. Of all this Hester knew nothing; and she felt that she could not keep up any semblance of anger with a man who had actually been placing himself in peril for her sake, according to her simple notions.

"I am not hard-hearted, indeed!" she exclaimed, her beautiful violet eyes filling with tears, which she vainly strove to hide by bending down over the monkey. "I am very pleased to see you again, sir; and I have never forgotten you—never—although I would not answer the letter you sent me by Fanny Fowler, because I thought it was wrong, and would get her into trouble as

well as myself, if Miss Flight found it out. I was thinking of you when I was standing at the schoolroom window just now," continued Hester, innocently, "and wondering if I should ever see you again, little knowing you were so near me all the while; but I was angry at first, because you startled me so; and you must go now, Captain Sefton, you must, indeed!" urged the girl, in sudden terror. "The Misses Flight, or one of the servants, may miss me at any minute, and it is entirely against the rules for any of us to come out of the house alone, to say nothing of"—She paused, with a vivid blush, and Captain Sefton finished the sentence for her.

"To say nothing of flirting with organ-grinders behind the bushes," he whispered, mischievously. "Well, Hester, I will go; you shall run no further risk for me. Never mind if I am taken up as an impostor before I reach home!" At this dark suggestion Hester's eyes grew wide with terror. "At any rate, I will not keep you here a minute longer; but you must tell me—Do you think I can part with you so easily, child?" and Gilbert's voice grew tender once more. He was certainly a past-master in the art of love-making. "When shall I see you again?"

Hester hung her head sadly.

"I don't think you will see me any more at all, sir," she replied, in her quaint, grave fashion. "I am going away from here next week."

"Where?" anxiously.

"I don't know exactly where the place is—somewhere in Devonshire, I believe; but I am going to be a companion—a useful companion, you know," was the simple reply.

"Merciful Heaven, what folly!" exclaimed her questioner, hotly. "What can your people be thinking of to allow such a sacrifice? Why, it will be slavery—worse than slavery, Hester!"

"It will be exactly what I have been educated for, and what I have always expected to become, Captain Sefton," answered the girl, bravely; although her heart echoed the truth of his words, her pride forbade her accepting any pity for her lot. "I have no 'people,' as you call them, except one old uncle settled in Barbadoes, who paid my expenses here only till I was old enough to work for myself; and now I am going to begin to do it. You see I was right when I

said I should never see you again," continued Hester, with a faint little smile. "You will be here—I mean, in London—amusing yourself in all sorts of gay places, while I shall be living quietly down in Devonshire with Miss Carruthers."

She paused. Gilbert Sefton's dark, handsome face, which had grown sullen and moody as he listened to her, changed suddenly in such a remarkable way at the mention of the name that Hester stopped short to gaze at him.

"Carruthers!" he repeated, half incredulously. "Are you going to be a companion to Miss Carruthers of Combe?"

"Do you know her?" asked Hester, in her turn, breathlessly.

He laughed a short, mocking, unpleasant laugh, which somehow scared the girl, and made her glance round timidly.

"Know her!" he echoed, his voice grown suddenly harsh. "I know this much of her, child, that she has stood between me and fortune this many a long day! Why, she is my dead mother's only sister, Hester, owning more thousands than she can count—thousands which she squanders on a score of fantastic old maid's whims, while her unlucky nephew"—He broke off suddenly.

Through the gathering darkness of the winter afternoon his sharp eyes detected a gleam of light streaming through the bushes from the open door of Chapone House; a voice was heard calling twice, thrice, angrily.

Quick as thought, Gilbert Sefton drew Hester to him and covered her face with a shower of hasty kisses.

"Good-night, my little love, good-night, but not good-by! We shall meet at Combe," he breathed in her ear, as he shouldered the organ, tucked the jabbering monkey inside his coat, and disappeared through the iron gates.

Hester, flying up the stone steps and into the dimly-lighted hall, found herself confronted sternly by the youngest Miss Flight, who was calmly awaiting the arrival of the fly which had been ordered to convey herself and her sister to the scene of their festivities.

"Miss Tredwin," she began, majestically; but Hester, with the courage of despair, forestalled her.

"I beg your pardon, Miss Amelia," she said. "I know I have done wrong in run-

ning out of the house without leave; but there was no one in the schoolroom to set a bad example to, and I went," waxing bolder as she proceeded, "to speak to—to—a monkey."

"To a monkey!" repeated Miss Amelia Flight, doubtfully, as with unwilling admiration she scanned the beautiful flushed face before her, contrasting it mentally with the poor faded features and meagre outline she had been studying so carefully in her glass for the last hour. "That is an absurd excuse for disobedience, Miss Tredwin! I was not aware that monkeys could speak."

"There was the man, ma'am," rejoined Hester, demurely, as she removed the damp shawl from her head and struggled vainly to smooth down the ruffled braids of her rebellious hair. For the life of her she could not have checked the happy smile that dimpled round her mouth as she made the answer; possibilities of such a gorgeously happy future seemed gleaming in the distance for her, after all!

Miss Flight's brow grew dark with anger at the reply.

"Your first speech was only a foolish one; your second is actually immodest, Miss Tredwin," she said, freezingly, as she put out a long, flat foot to be encased in an appalling overshoe of knitted red wool by the solemn Sarah. "I fail to see what any inmate of Chapone House can have in common with an organ-grinder or a monkey, and I shall be glad if you will remain in your own room for the rest of the evening. I only trust we have not done wrong in recommending you to Miss Carruthers as a companion. You appear to me incorrigibly giddy and foolish."

"You can take my fur cloak, Robert, and wrap it round Coco; she looks cold, poor darling; and just loosen Crab's collar a hole or two; he wheezes so that it makes me quite nervous. Toby wants a sponge cake. Oh, not that sort! he hates any but lady's-fingers. You had better go and buy him some at the refreshment room, and bring a saucer of milk for Coco as well. Not time? Nonsense! the train will not start for twenty minutes yet. Get me a *Times* and a *Post* as you pass the bookstall; and see that the man cuts them properly, and gives you the right change for a five-pound note. You can tell Mr. Gilbert, if you should see him on the platform, that I am in the ladies' waiting-

room; but no doubt he has by this time changed his intention of traveling down with me. By-the-by, that puts me in mind that a young person was to meet me. Robert! Robert! Oh, he is gone!" Then, turning to her maid, the speaker said, "Markham, I want you. Just ask the woman, will you, if there is any young person here who has been inquiring for Miss Carruthers."

The lady paused from want of breath, and leaned back exhausted against the cushioned seat into which she had thrown herself. She was a peculiar looking woman; indeed, there was that about Miss Alicia Carruthers of Combe Manor, that compelled observation whether one would or no. Nearer sixty than fifty, and still possessing considerable remains of personal beauty, she seemed determined to remind the world of the fact by the fantastic conspicuousness of her attire. Her rich skirts of violet velvet bordered with chinchilla fur swept the floor, while a long, almost regal mantle of ermine, crimson lined, hung upon her tall, emaciated figure as though her bony shoulders were veritable pegs for the display of drapery. Her hair, luxuriant still, though iron-gray, hung in loose, waved braids on either side of a face once purely oval, but now so lined and worn by time that the unmistakable patch of rouge on each faded cheek seemed to draw one's attention more forcibly to the hollow outline. The features were regular even yet; the nose was high-bridged and aristocratic; the dark eyes were keen and restless as ever. Those hawk-like eyes had, in days gone by, been the one fault of Alicia Carruthers' handsome face; they were sharp, hard, and glittering as those of a bird of prey. A hat, youthful in shape, and decorated with two long, curling ostrich plumes, one red, one white, completed her gaudy attire.

As though on purpose to create as much sensation as possible, she was surrounded by a perfect retinue of pets, furred and feathered. An immense Persian cat, with a bushy tail, sat solemnly beside her on the waiting-room table; a black and white Japanese dog of rare breed slept peacefully on an embroidered cushion at her feet; while a chair close by was occupied by an immense brass cage containing a macaw of brilliant hues, a smaller one, filled with fluttering canaries and Java sparrows, being in the possession of a harrassed-looking maid, who

stared helplessly around at the other in mates of the apartment as her mistress reiterated her inquiry in a high, fretful voice.

"Cannot you ask? Surely you have a tongue in your head! Is there any one here for Miss Carruthers?"

At the repetition of the question a tall, slender girl rose from a corner at the far end of the room and advanced towards the great lady.

"If you please, madam," she said, with grave simplicity, "I come to you from the Misses Flight's. I am Hester Tredwin."

Miss Carruthers deliberately lodged a pair of gold-rimmed eye-glasses on the bridge of her bony nose, and indulged herself in a long, critical stare at her new acquisition.

"Humph!" she ejaculated at length, dropping her glasses and turning carelessly to caress the cat at her elbow. "I don't expect you will be of much use to me; but time will show. Help Markham to collect the wraps."

Timidly enough Hester commenced to load herself with three or four of the gay-colored rugs and shawls which were strewn in untidy profusion upon the seat occupied by her mistress. She was just meditating whether she should offer to carry the cat or not, when the much-enduring Robert made his appearance, laden with newspapers, and followed obsequiously by two porters with foot-warmers, and a woman from the refreshment room bearing a plate of cakes and a tumbler of milk.

The train would start in five minutes, and Captain Sefton had already secured a carriage for his aunt and was waiting for her on the platform, announced Robert.

"Vastly civil, I'm sure!" remarked Miss Carruthers, scornfully, as she gathered the ample folds of her ermine cloak round her and rose leisurely from her seat. "He must be harder up than usual to waste so much of his time on me. Markham, you had better carry Toby as well as the other birds. Robert can lead Crab—he prefers walking; and Treadmill, or whatever her name is, can take charge of Coco. Pick her up," commanded Miss Carruthers, in a tone of withering contempt, as Hester hesitated for a moment as to the possibility of carrying four large railway-rugs and an enormous cat, into the bargain; "she won't eat you. And don't drop her, pray, for she is worth a good deal more than you are, the darling treasure!"

"Why, Aunt Alicia, this is more like a royal progress than usual. Why didn't you order a special train?" inquired a laughing voice at the waiting-room door.

Gilbert Sefton stood there, handsome and gay, in his fur-lined traveling coat, with the last fragment of a fragrant cigar between his lips.

"Allow me," and he dexterously relieved the companion of her load of wraps, giving her hand a warning squeeze at the same time, for the girl's wax-like cheeks had grown crimson at the sight of him. "I will carry any amount of wearing apparel, but none of the menagerie. A new maid, aunt—eh?" he continued, jerking his head in the direction of Hester, who brought up the rear of the procession with the cat in her arms. "I can't say I like the look of her much! Whatever induced you to choose such a young one?"

"She is not a maid at all, but a companion," rejoined his aunt, with dignity, as, pioneered by her astute nephew, she threaded her way through the hustling, hurrying crowd on the platform, and took her seat in the luxurious first-class carriage, already labeled "Engaged," which Captain Sefton had secured for her. "And as to your not liking the look of her, Gilbert," went on the old lady, "allow me to remark that you spend so little of your time at Combe that the appearance of any member of my household cannot be of much importance to you. By-the-by, has any one procured the girl a ticket?" exclaimed Miss Carruthers, suddenly. "Robert—Robert!"

But the footman, having deposited the dog and the macaw, together with his mistress's multitudinous bags and packages, on the several vacant seats of the carriage, had already gone to secure his own place in the train.

"There, now, he does not hear me!" sighed the old lady. "Ten to one but that foolish creature will get left behind with poor Coco! Is she in? Look, Gilbert, and tell me if you can see her anywhere."

Captain Sefton darted away, and in a few seconds was back again with a very long face at the window of the carriage.

"I have found your companion, Aunt Alicia," he remarked, dolefully, "and I wish you joy of her! She is wedged into a second-class compartment, crowded to suffocation; there is a boy with his face tied up on one side of her, and a woman who looks

as if she is just recovering from a fever on the other. You'll have to send to the doctor for the young woman as soon as ever you reach Combe—she'll hardly survive this journey!"

Miss Carruthers gave a cry of horror; amongst her many "fads" was an unreasonable dread of infection.

"Get her out—get her out at any price, and bundle her in here—anywhere!" she exclaimed, excitedly; and Gilbert, having thus cleverly attained his object, flew to drag the bewildered Hester out of the carriage in which she was seated with Markham, and hurried her in, cat and all, beside his aunt, just as the train glided out of the station into the raw, misty coldness of the December day.

That memorable journey savored of enchantment to the Misses Flight's late pupil-teacher. Hitherto her experience of traveling had been confined to one expedition to the seaside, undertaken when she, in common with one of the maids of Chapone House, was recovering from a severe attack of scarlet-fever, and the doctor had peremptorily ordered her removal to the coast for a fortnight, before resuming her duties among the pupils.

On that occasion Hester had traveled second class, seated with her back to the engine, on a hard, uncomfortable seat, that made her, in her weak state, nearly cry with weariness, and provided only with captain's-biscuits and a bottle of water for refreshment on the way. It seemed a sort of fairyland, indeed, to lean back at her ease on the soft, dark-blue cushions, with her feet resting on a foot-warmer, and her eyes idly watching fields, towns, and villages, as they flew past the window in quick succession.

To Hester it seemed like a dream that at the other end of the warm, comfortable carriage Captain Sefton was sitting, a fur traveling-cap pulled well down over his dark, handsome brows, his attention apparently entirely engrossed by Miss Carruthers, who was giving him a graphic account of Crab's last apoplectic attack. He could spare time, however, to cast an occasional glance in Hester's direction, which showed the girl that she was not forgotten, and caused her foolish heart to beat with a wild, unreasoning happiness.

Presently came luncheon; and, although Miss Carruthers looked on with grim disap-

proval, she could hardly interfere openly when Gilbert, in all innocence, handed Miss Tredwin a packet of game sandwiches. After all, she had told him that the girl was not actually a servant, and, therefore, perhaps it was necessary to show her some sort of politeness.

As for Hester, she ate her dainty and unaccustomed fare, as she did everything else on that eventful day, as one in a dream.

The journey down into the very heart of Devon was a long one. The short winter day closed in early, and by half-past three the travelers could distinguish but a mere ghost-like outline of the country through which the train was passing.

Miss Carruthers composed herself for slumber in her corner, looking more weird and fantastic than ever in a fleecy white hood which she drew over her plumed hat; while Captain Sefton lit a silver-fitted traveling lamp with a green silk shade, in addition to the ordinary one in the roof of the carriage, and set himself to deciphering three or four closely-written letters by its subdued light.

Hester watched him languidly; she felt too happy, too utterly content even to wonder what would be the next act in this strange drama. The cat nestling comfortably on her knee slept soundly, and by degrees, lulled by the motion of the carriage, exhausted by the suppressed excitement she had been struggling with since early morning, Miss Carruthers' companion slept too—slept so soundly as to remain all unconscious of the fact that Gilbert had crumpled his correspondence into his pocket with an impatient sigh, and was leaning back in his seat, watching her with earnest eyes, while he discontentedly wished his Aunt Alicia anywhere but where she was at that precise moment.

He had already come to the conclusion that a fortnight, or even a month, spent in the dreary monotony of Combe Manor, dancing attendance on his aunt, and trying hard to win a place in her favor, would be made infinitely more bearable by Hester's presence than it had ever been before. His customary visits seldom lasted more than three days, at the end of which period aunt and nephew usually commenced telling home truths to each other, resulting in Gilbert's flying up to town at an hour's notice, and Miss Carruthers' assuring him he should never darken her doors again.

This time, however, all would be different; there would be some relief from the spiteful old maid's "fads" and fancies—some one tender and loving and lovely to tease and caress and make love to in his spare moments. It was an extraordinary stroke of luck, he told himself, as he gazed with an artist's admiration on Hester's fair face, thrown up by the dark-blue cushion behind it, that fate had thrown this girl thus opportunely in his path.

With such an attraction he felt he would be able to endure the hateful restraints and restrictions of life at Combe long enough, at any rate, to find out what his aunt intended to do for him eventually, or whether she meant to do anything at all. Affairs were at their very lowest ebb with Gilbert Sefton just then; it was as much as he could do to keep his head above the sea of debt, the result of fifteen years' reckless extravagance, which threatened soon to engulf him entirely in its depths. His expectations from Miss Carruthers were his only chance of escape from the difficulties that surrounded him; and who could vouch for the actions of a woman changeable as the wind, whose fortune was absolutely under her own control? She might leave him sole possessor of her wealth one day, and, in a fit of pique, hand it all over to a dog-doctor or to a missionary preacher the next.

"The best thing that could happen to me would be for her to break her neck without making a will at all," soliloquized Gilbert, moodily, as he glanced at his opposite neighbor. The swinging light overhead gave a strange, almost terrible expression to his handsome features for a moment, and his aunt, opening her eyes suddenly and meeting his gaze, drew her cloak more closely round her with a slight shudder.

"Mercy on us, Gilbert, what a cut-throat air you have!" she exclaimed, with her customary frankness. "One would think you were plotting murder, at least, to judge from your looks! What time is it? Five o'clock? Why, we ought to be at Torchester. Ah, I thought so!" as the train, with a shrill whistle, slackened speed, and the lights of the little town gleamed brightly here and there in the winter darkness. "Miss Tredwin," sharply to Hester, who, roused by the sound of voices, had opened her bewildered eyes and was trying to look very wide awake, "if you don't mean to be carried on to the next station, you had

better stir yourself and collect the wraps and bags. You will stay behind with Markham, of course, and take charge of the pets, while she and Robert look after the luggage."

The train stopped as Miss Carruthers spoke, and the usual slight confusion of passengers alighting ensued. There were but few travelers bound for Torchester, and in two or three minutes Hester found herself standing sentinel-wise over a heap of handbags and bird-cages, with Coco, the cat, tucked under one arm, and Crab's leading-string in the other hand.

The long drive through narrow country lanes in a dark and jolting fly, with Markham, the maid, as a companion, seemed interminable, and the girl's face was pale with fatigue as she stumbled up the broad stone steps of Combe Manor, and stood, half dazed, in the brightly-lighted hall.

Miss Carruthers was there, her tall fur-and-velvet-clad figure in perfect harmony with the oak carvings and the rich tapestries. She cast a half contemptuous glance at the companion, and turned to a woman of about five and fifty, who stood respectfully awaiting her orders.

"See this young person to her room, Sarel," she said, carelessly; "you can send her some tea up-stairs presently. You received my letter about her, of course?"

"Certainly, madam," replied Mrs. Sarel, readily. "Will you please come this way, Miss—Miss"—She paused, and glanced at her mistress.

"Oh, 'Tredwin' is her name," responded Miss Carruthers, with indifference. "Good-night," she added, curtly, giving a cold nod to Hester, as the girl glanced timidly towards her before following the housekeeper. "I sha'n't want you down-stairs any more to-night; to-morrow you will, of course, commence your regular duties."

She turned away to enter a room on her right as she spoke, and through the open door Hester caught a glimpse of Captain Sefton lounging against a carved mantel-piece with a coffee-cup in his hand.

Mrs. Sarel bustled across the hall and up a wide staircase of dark oak, her black silk dress rustling at every step.

"This is your room, my dear," she said, good-naturedly, as, after traversing a carpeted gallery which seemed to Hester almost endless, she threw open the door of a pretty chintz-draped bed-chamber, with a cosey fire

burning brightly in the grate. "You see there's a bell in it," pointing to one hanging immediately over the bed, "which the mistress can ring from her own bedroom if she wants you; but that won't be often at night, I should fancy, as Markham, of course, undresses her, and such like. Now I'll send you in a good cup of tea, and see to your box being brought up; and when you've unpacked your things, if you'll take my advice, you'll go straight to bed, for you're regularly tired out, I perceive. And it won't do for you to show Miss Carruthers such a pale face to-morrow; she can't abide anyone to look sickly."

"I am very tired," confessed Hester, as she untied her little black bonnet, while a long plait of her chestnut hair, loosened in traveling, fell heavily upon her shoulder. "Do you—do you sleep anywhere near me?" she asked, timidly; somehow, she felt strangely forlorn in this grand, stately mansion, and half dreaded being left alone.

Mrs. Sarel laughed good-humoredly, and patted the girl's fair cheek.

"No, no, my dear," she replied, in her cheery way. "Servants' bedrooms are not usually to be found in the best parts of the house. Miss Carruthers' last companion had this room, because it was so conveniently near the mistress's if she wanted to be read to sleep, and therefore I thought it best to put you here, also; but no one uses the rooms in this gallery excepting visitors, and, of course, Miss Carruthers herself. If you'll step out here I'll show you."

The housekeeper held the flat candlestick she carried high in the air, and drew Hester after her into the passage.

"The mistress sleeps there," she went on, indicating with her finger a room at the extremity of the gallery; "her dressing-room and sitting-room come next to her bedroom; and all these other chambers," pointing to various closed doors, "are unused unless we have company, which seldom happens now. Mr. Gilbert occupies the room at that other end," continued Mrs. Sarel. "It is called his, and is always prepared for him when he comes."

Hester peered with fresh interest down the long, mysterious-looking passage.

"What an immense window!" she remarked, as her eyes caught the dark gleam of glass in the distance.

A kind of shadow seemed to steal over Mrs. Sarel's face for an instant.

"Yes," she replied, quietly; "we call it the red window, because it is all made of ruby glass that the old squire brought back with him from abroad. The effect is very pretty outside when the gallery is lighted; but, if I had my way, there'd be a shutter closed over it at night, to keep out the cold. Good-night, miss. I hope you'll find your bed comfortable."

She trotted away briskly, and Hester turned back into her cosy bedroom and shut the door. Sitting down beside the fire, she lost herself in a perfect dream of happiness in which she and Gilbert Sefton played the leading parts. Disappointment, broken vows, deception, ruined hopes, bore no part in that enchanted vision. Her own position of dependence in a strange household, her employer's arrogance, her utter ignorance of the character and antecedents of her would-be lover, were all forgotten. She was beneath the same roof with the man who six months before had won her heart with his tender glances, his honeyed tongue—within sound of his voice and footstep, within reach of his passion-stirred eyes!

At eighteen—thoughtless, trusting, uncalculating as eighteen ought to be—Hester Tredwin asked no better happiness than this; and she laid her head on her pillow that night half incredulous still as to her own good fortune.

Fate decreed that one more strange experience should be hers ere morning dawned. Waking suddenly after several hours of peaceful sleep, she was startled by a bright light gleaming through the keyhole and chinks of her bedroom door. The fire in the grate had died completely out, and a stable clock striking one just beneath her window convinced the girl that the general household of Combe Manor must have long retired to rest.

With a hasty but uncontrollable impulse, she jumped out of bed, and noiselessly opening her door, peeped into the gallery.

The sight she saw almost took away her breath. Within a few paces of her advanced Miss Carruthers, candle in hand, her tall figure draped in a sweeping dressing-gown of rose-colored cashmere, a marvelous erection of lace and ribbons—presumably a night-cap—towering on her head. The light she carried fell upon her gaunt and pallid features, upon her hollow cheeks, from which all paint had disappeared, upon the plaited braids of gray hair hanging upon

her shoulders, upon—oh, crowning horror!—her dark, widely-opened, yet sightless eyes fixed on vacancy, with the terrible, immovable stare of the sleep-walker.

Transfixed with fear, Hester remained motionless as the figure glided past her, phantom-like, down to the very end of the long, dark gallery, pausing there to stand as though spellbound before the great, unshuttered window, and setting down the flaring candle on the floor beside it, to wring its hands twice, thrice, uttering the while a low, smothered cry.

Trembling like an aspen-leaf, the girl watched until Miss Carruthers noiselessly retraced her steps, disappearing finally into her room again, and closing the door gently behind her.

The whole affair had not occupied five minutes; but sleep visited the eyes of Hester Tredwin no more, and at earliest dawn she stole down the gallery to investigate the mysterious window more closely.

She found nothing within or without to gratify her curiosity, or to afford any clew to the strange sight she had witnessed some hours before. The window itself was of a considerable height—some twelve or fourteen feet—from the ground; it was composed entirely of large panes of ruby glass, and opened from floor to ceiling, French fashion, instead of with the more ordinary sash-line. The reason for this was not apparent, as there was neither balcony nor veranda beyond. The view it commanded was peaceful in the extreme. Beyond the large, paved court-yard, shut in by heavy iron gates, stretched a fine avenue of elms, for which Combe Manor was renowned. A sudden turn in the wide road hid the distant lodge wholly from sight. Seen through the crimson glass, the leafless trees seemed bathed in the ruddy glow of sunrise. A few rooks cawed sleepily among the bare branches, while at the bend of the drive an old man was gathering dead leaves into a basket.

It was a still, mild afternoon early in February. A groom, dressed in the dark green livery of Combe Manor, was leading a very handsome, showy chestnut mare gently up and down a narrow by-street in Torchester. The mare was the property of Gilbert Sefton, and its owner was closely closeted with Mr. Snape, of the firm of Blundell & Snape, chief solicitors in Tor-

chester, whose small and inconvenient offices were situated in the very narrowest, dingiest, most "un-get-at-able" little corner in the whole town.

"I am sorry I cannot give you a more satisfactory answer, Captain," Mr. Snape was saying, carefully paring his finger-nails with a penknife while he spoke, as though that occupation were the one absorbing interest of his life. The junior partner in the firm was a man of fully sixty-seven, large-featured and loose-limbed, with a pair of shaggy, grizzled eyebrows, from beneath which peered forth two strangely keen, intelligent gray eyes. "It would be idle for me, as a friend, to buoy you up with false hopes," the lawyer went on. "Unquestionably, as her only surviving relative, you have every right to the position of Miss Carruther's heir; but a woman possessing, as she does, absolute control over the whole of her property is a very dangerous foundation to build such expectations upon; and, although I may be guilty of a slight infringement of professional etiquette, I will not conceal from you that when, about two years since, we drew up a will according to your aunt's instructions—which will was, I admit, subsequently destroyed by her orders—your name was merely mentioned as legatee for a trifling amount, the bulk of her fortune, as far as my memory serves me, being distributed among various charities."

Gilbert Sefton's brow grew dark as night at the lawyer's words. His gloved right hand closed suddenly like a vise on the gold-mounted hunting-stock he held. Mr. Snape saw the action and shut his penknife with a sharp click. He had witnessed one or two ebullitions of passion on the part of his present client, with regard to Miss Carruthers and her misdeeds, and was in no way desirous of having the experience repeated.

"While there is life there is hope, remember, my dear sir," he remarked, trying to say something pleasant as he rose from his Windsor chair, and pushed up his gold-rimmed spectacles on to his bald forehead as an intimation that the interview was ended. "With her changeable temperament, your aunt may turn and do you justice at the very last moment; and you may be quite sure that any promise you or any one else extracted from her as to the disposal of her money would not bind her in the slightest degree if she felt inclined to alter her

mind on the subject. All you can do is patiently to await the future. It may not be long; Miss Carruthers is no longer a young woman, and her health has failed her greatly of late. The very fact of her revoking the will I was speaking of may be an indication that she repented the injustice she had done you, and intends eventually to act more in your favor."

Captain Sefton rose from his seat and began to button his coat.

"At any rate, you can assure me that no such absurd document as you mentioned just now is in existence at present?" he asked, carelessly.

"Most emphatically I can, as far as my own knowledge extends," was the cautious reply.

"And how about Oliver & Graham, those fellows in Gray's Inn?" questioned Gilbert, as with a meditative air he rolled a cigarette. He had good reasons of his own for believing that his aunt had quarreled with her London lawyers; but having failed to obtain a straightforward answer from either them or herself on this subject, he had determined to try to get the information out of Mr. Snape. When Gilbert Sefton had any particular end in view, he liked to make very sure of the ground he worked on, and he was doing his best to make very sure now.

Mr. Snape, whom nature certainly never intended for a lawyer, answered him without reserve. He was a kindly, large-hearted old man, with sons of his own comfortably and honorably working their way in the world; and he felt a certain pity for this handsome, ne'er-do-well scapegrace whom he had known from a boy, and who, at five and thirty, was utterly dependent on the caprices of a whimsical, half-cracked old woman like Alicia Carruthers.

"Miss Carruthers had some difference of opinion with Messrs. Oliver & Graham a little time since," he answered, with a half-smile. "It resulted in every paper of hers they held being transferred to our firm; and, as I had the examining of them all, I can testify to the fact that there was no will of any kind amongst them. I believe conscientiously, Captain Sefton, that at the present time my partner and myself represent your aunt's sole legal advisers."

"Well, at any rate, I shall know who is answerable for it if Combe Manor and five thousand a year fall in to the Choctaw Indians!" rejoined Captain Sefton, with a

sudden assumption of gayety. "Ta-ta, Snape, awfully obliged to you for boring yourself with my affairs for so long. Remember, I leave myself entirely in your hands; if you can put in a good word for me with my aunt, I know you will do so."

He lounged out of the lawyer's office as he spoke, and stood leaning idly against the small, dark entrance to the house till his horse was brought up. Telling the groom he had no further orders for him, he trotted leisurely away down the lonely high-road, deep in thought.

So absorbing were his meditations indeed that he well-nigh forgot a second appointment he had made for that afternoon, besides his interview with Mr. Snape, and was half up the elm avenue leading to Combe, now growing gray and shadowy in the early twilight, ere he remembered, and turned his horse aside amongst the fallen brown leaves and bare branches of a plantation to keep it.

Some one else, it seemed, had been faithful to the tryst, at all hazards. Hester Tredwin was waiting for him there, shrouded in a long russet cloak of the color of the withered leaves, the hood drawn half over her ruffled, wavy locks, her lovely face all aglow with the haste she had made.

Gilbert Sefton sprang from the chestnut's back, and, slinging the bridle over one arm, took the fair, blushing cheeks in his two hands.

"I nearly forgot all about you, Hester mine," he whispered gayly. "It is true, I assure you; but you need not look so jealous, child, for it was only old Snape with his eternal croaking who put you out of my head. Come and sit down a minute." He drew her with him to the stump of a fallen tree and placed himself beside her. "There does not seem to be much chance for me with my worthy aunt," he remarked bitterly, as he took one of the girl's slender hand in his, and drew off the warm glove that covered it, "no likelihood, so far as I can see, of my ever having a home of my own at all, much less one I could ask any woman to share with me, Hester."

He spoke sadly for the express purpose of seeing the ready sympathy in Hester's tender face. To her alone in all the world could Gilbert Sefton pose as an ill-used hero of romance, a man who had been buffeted all his life by storms of ill-fortune and strokes of adverse fate. Hester believed in and adored him, and her lover would sooner have

led a forlorn hope than remove the scales from her innocent eyes and show himself to her in his true colors. Like many another bad man, he had an almost superstitious reverence for purity, and the girl's childish ignorance of all evil had, in reality, a far stronger hold over him than her beauty alone would ever have obtained.

"You would marry me, would you not, to be mistress of Combe, Hester?" he whispered, well knowing what her answer would be. "By and by, in years to come, if some rare stroke of good fortune should ever make it mine, I shall come home and remind you of your promise. But I forgot"—interrupting himself quickly—"I must not tie you, child. What am I, beggar that I am, to bid any woman waste and wear out her youth and loveliness waiting for me?"

With the frank trust of a child, Hester Tredwin laid her disengaged hand beside its fellow in her lover's broad palm, and rested her soft cheek against his tweed-clad shoulder.

"I would wait for you till I was old and gray-haired, Gilbert," she whispered, never dreaming in her innocence that in such circumstances Gilbert himself might not be quite so willing to fulfill his share of the bargain. "But that I fear to do you harm, I would go straight to Miss Carruthers now and plead for you. I cannot believe that, if she really knew the straits you are in for money, she would refuse her help. Sometimes I think that more than half her harsh manner is assumed to hide her real feelings; and, at any rate, we know"—and the girl's voice fell to a low whisper—"that she has not yet forgotten she was once young herself."

Captain Sefton drew the slight figure nearer to him, and raised his dark face above the bent head, so that it was invisible to his companion.

"Tell me, dear," he questioned, in a low, incredulous voice, "she does not still keep up that folly, does she? Or, if so, she must be aware of what she is about, and the whole affair is just one of her 'fads.' I can't imagine Aunt Alicia dreaming and wringing her hands over a man who has been dust and ashes these thirty years! It says something for her constancy certainly; you would never be so faithful to me, Hester!"

"I should never drive you from me as your aunt drove her lover away," responded Hester, with grave simplicity. "Mrs. Sarel

has told me the whole story, Gilbert. Fancy Miss Carruthers standing at that window and watching the man she loved so dearly ride out of sight mad with passion at her cruel words, and then hearing the next morning that he was drowned, and that she could never see him or speak to him again! No wonder the remembrance haunts her very dreams." She paused shuddering. "It haunts even me," she went on hurriedly. "If I had anything to do with Combe, I would block up the red window; or, if that could not be done, I would put plain panes of clear glass there that would let the wholesome honest sunshine through, instead of that unnatural crimson glare. Only last night I had a terrible dream about it. I dreamed that the fastening had been left undone somehow, and Miss Carruthers"—

She was interrupted suddenly. Captain Sefton put her from him with a half-impatient gesture, and with a slight shiver rose from his seat on the tree-stump.

"A chill, Hester mine," he said lightly, in answer to her inquiring eyes, "or perhaps a goose walking over my grave! Fit accompaniment, my dear, to your dolorous stories and dreams." He drew the girl's cloak closer round her as he spoke, and glanced at his watch. "Your half-hour's absence is ended, darling," he whispered tenderly. "Hurry home, now. You ought not to be missed."

He had his foot in the stirrup as he uttered the last word, but lingered a minute, with a half-smile, watching the girl as she hurried off in the direction of the house. When a bend in the shrubbery hid her from view, he turned the mare once more into the avenue, and trotted home leisurely as though just returning from his afternoon ride.

The short winter day was rapidly closing in, and the lights of Combe Manor twinkled cheerfully here and there through the trees, conspicuous amongst them all shone the red window, its crimson panes casting a fiery glow down into the road beneath. Gilbert Sefton glanced up at it once or twice, a curious expression upon his dark face, as though he were mentally calculating its height from the ground.

"She is right," he muttered to himself. "It shall be altered if"—

It was long since the servants who waited at the table had witnessed so festive a meal as the seven o'clock dinner that night at

Combe Manor. As a rule, Miss Carruthers observed a rigidly austere demeanor towards her nephew, varied by occasional flat and pungent contradictions of every opinion he expressed, which made conversation at times most difficult to sustain. After two or three outrageous snubs, Gilbert, with a hopeless shrug of the shoulders, would usually resign himself to silence and the discussion of his dinner, and Hester, who by virtue of her unwearied attentions to the pets, had very quickly made herself indispensable to her mistress, and was consequently promoted to the honor of a seat at the table, would spend her time glancing timidly from one to the other of her antagonistic companions, wondering which one of them would break the interminable silence first. On this occasion, however, Gilbert seemed bent on displaying his powers of attraction to the utmost.

Laying himself regularly out to please, he proved sufficiently amusing as a *raconteur* to force his aunt to unbend and listen to his conversation almost against her will. Witty stories, racy jests, picturesque word-sketches fell lightly from his facile lips; and Hester, listening spell-bound, and watching the suppressed excitement of the speaker's dark expressive face, asked herself humbly what there could be in herself, a mere unformed schoolgirl, to attract the notice and gratify the taste of so brilliant a man of the world as Captain Sefton.

Later on, her wonder at the varied talents, hitherto not exhibited, increased tenfold. Contrary to his usual custom of lingering late over his wine, Gilbert, on this particular evening, followed the ladies to the drawing-room immediately after dinner. The light there was soft yet brilliant with the radiance of wax-candles and the sparkle of the great wood-fire.

Hester Tredwin stood on the great tawny leopard-skin before the glowing hearth, the folds of the white sprigged muslin she wore falling gracefully to her feet, the beads of a carved coral necklet, her one ornament, gleaming ruddily in the firelight against the curves of her snowy neck.

In after years she could always recall how she lingered there on that never-to-be-forgotten night, while Gilbert Sefton sang scraps of Moor's melodies and old French ditties to his own accompaniment from the dim corner where the grand piano stood, and Miss Carruthers, gorgeous in crimson brocaded silk, sat bolt upright in her high-backed chair,

beating time unconsciously to the music. He sang a Spanish love-song afterwards to a guitar that he produced from somewhere, and improvised variations on its well-known air with such marvelous facility that his aunt set down her Sevres coffee-cup to listen, and rapped her Chinese fan smartly against the inlaid table at her side in token of applause.

"You should certainly have been an actor, Gilbert. You have mistaken your vocation," she said graciously, as, punctually at half-past ten o'clock, old Robbins, the butler, made his appearance with a silver tray of spirits and water and the bedroom candlesticks. "Sarel tells me you intend leaving Combe to-morrow. This is sudden, is it not?"

There was a ring of something like kindness in her hard, cold voice as she spoke. Captain Sefton, pouring out a good half-tumbler of brandy, to which he added but a dash of water, had his back turned to her at the moment, and swallowed the draught hastily before he answered.

"Not more sudden than my movements usually are, Aunt Alicia," he replied, carelessly, as he held the door open for Miss Carruthers and her companion to pass out. "If you will have me, though, I intend to run down again next week. Are there any commissions that I can execute for you in town?"

He addressed his aunt; but his dark, passionate eyes were fixed on Hester. With sudden audacity, he snatched her to him and kissed her violently once, twice, while Miss Carruthers, serenely unconscious of what was going on behind her, sailed majestically across the hall.

"Good-night, my—Mrs. Gilbert Sefton," he whispered, mischievously, in the girl's ear as he released her, a red mark on her delicate cheek testifying to the violence of his embrace.

When she was alone in her room, Hester fairly trembled at the remembrance of his boldness.

"If he would only tell the truth, or let me, it would save us so much trouble," she said to herself, as she sat by the fire unplaiting her long chestnut locks. "I love him so dearly, I would walk barefoot through the world for his sake; but I cannot bear remaining here and deceiving Miss Carruthers, who, after all, is kind to me in her way. I ought to leave, if Gilbert would let me,

and write and explain the reason to her afterwards. There must be other people in the world besides Miss Carruthers who are lonely and need companions; or I might be a governess, and teach little children."

Absorbed in revolving all sorts of impossible plans in her mind, Hester, weary enough from a long walk that she had taken in the morning, grew gradually drowsy. She leaned her head against an angle of the white marble mantelpiece, and in five minutes dropped into a sound sleep.

She woke with a violent start. Had some one called her? She could have sworn a voice in the room said, "Hester!" Trembling, she rose to her feet and stood listening.

Only a trace of red lingered amongst the dying embers on the hearth; her candle, a fairly long one when she fell asleep, had burnt down to the very socket, and she moved to replace it with another. As she did so, she heard the now well-known rustling step in the passage outside.

Creeping to the door, the girl opened it softly, and peeped out as she had peeped on the first night of her arrival at Combe.

Miss Carruthers was hastening as usual down the gallery with her customary rapid, unfaltering tread. High above her head she held a candle; but its light was almost quenched by the brilliant radiance of the moon, which streamed in unchecked upon the polished floor.

Unchecked! Why, the window—the red window—great heavens, was wide open! And she—

A warning scream rose to the lips of Hester Tredwin as the sleep-walker glided unconsciously on, on to the very brink of destruction! Ere it could be uttered, a strong hand covered her mouth, the iron grasp of one unseen held her grimly. A second later her shrieks rang out loud and shrill, rousing the echoes of the silent house and conveying to its occupants tidings of the dire catastrophe that had happened while they slept.

An inquest was held on the body of Miss Alicia Carruthers, spinster, of Combe Manor, in the County of Devon, who met her death by falling from the staircase window of her own house on the morning of the ninth of February, at two o'clock A. M., the principal witness examined being Captain Gilbert Vandeleur Sefton, nephew of the deceased,

and Hester Tredwin, her companion and secretary.

Captain Sefton deposed to the fact of having been aroused from sleep by the sound of screams on the night in question, and of hastening to the assistance of Miss Tredwin, whom he found insensible on the floor of the gallery, the red window being, when he arrived there, wide open.

Hester Tredwin, in her turn, gave evidence as to having actually witnessed her unfortunate employer's fall. She screamed loudly, but was too late to render her any help.

"Do you mean that, if you could have called out sooner, you might have awakened Miss Carruthers, and thus possibly saved her life?" asked the Coroner, Mr. Snape, compassionately.

The witness merely bowed in answer. It had been found necessary for Mrs. Sarel, the housekeeper, to support her in her arms during the inquiry. Her nerves had evidently been severely shaken.

The whole affair seemed shrouded in mystery. After due deliberation, the jury returned a verdict of "Death by misadventure," appending thereto a rider ascribing extreme carelessness to the person or persons whose duty it was to see all doors and windows on the premises properly secured at night. The blame of this attached itself mainly to the head housemaid at Combe, a simple Devonshire girl, who swore solemnly to the red window's having been closed as usual when she went to bed, but confessed with many tears to a doubt as to whether the "dratted bolt" on the top which made all safe had been drawn on that particular occasion or not.

On this bolt, then, the whole inquiry seemed to hang; if left unfastened, there was nothing for poor Miss Carruthers to do but turn the handle of the window, and thus, consciously or unconsciously, launch herself into eternity. Her sleep-walking propensities and romantic nightly visits to the spot where she had seen the last of a long-lost lover were well known in the village and neighborhood, and such a termination to a disappointed life was perhaps not much to be wondered at, after all.

Only one person could have told a different story, a girl who lay in one of the upper rooms at Combe for days and nights in the delirium of brain fever, waited on only by Mrs. Sarel, whom she implored piteously to keep Gilbert away, for the red window had covered him with blood.

Two months later, when Hester Tredwin rose from her sick-bed, pale and hollow-eyed, a very spectre of her former self, she learned that, while searching amongst the late Miss Carruthers' private papers in the library at Combe, her solicitors, Messrs. Blundell & Snape, had discovered a will, dated only a few months back, drawn up by her own hands entirely, but signed in the presence of qualified witnesses, and in all respects a perfectly valid document. This paper directed the sale of Combe Manor and all its contents immediately on the decease of the testatrix, the sum realized, together with the bulk of her private fortune, to be distributed amongst several flourishing charitable institutions to which she had always been a large subscriber.

There were three or four legacies to her oldest servants, and lastly a sum of five hundred pounds bequeathed to her nephew, Gilbert Vandeleur Sefton.

"Too bad!" pronounced society round about Torchester. "No wonder poor Captain Sefton, as soon as he heard the news, enlisted as a common soldier in a regiment ordered on foreign service! But, between you and me, my dear, the woman was cracked—quite cracked, poor thing! Not a doubt in the world that she threw herself out of that staircase window on purpose; but of course the whole affair was hushed up as much as possible!"

Many years afterwards, when Gilbert Sefton had been long dead—he had died in India, rumor said by his own hand—when Hester Tredwin was a happy wife and mother, and this dread experience of her youth seemed to her like the memory of a half-forgotten dream, she told me the terrible story which I have striven to reproduce here.

OLD GRIMES.

[A. G. Greene, born in Providence, R. I., February 10, 1802, was educated in Brown University, in that city, died 1868, was the author of the famous song, "Old Grimes is Dead," so seldom correctly published, but as popular as any in the English language. The following is a correct version.]

OLD Grimes is dead—that good old man,—
We ne'er shall see him more;
He used to wear a long black coat
All buttoned down before.

His heart was open as the day,
His feelings all were true,
His hair was some inclined to gray,
He wore it in a queue.

When'er he heard the voice of pain
His breast with pity burned,
The large round head upon his cane
From ivory was turned.

Kind words he ever had for all,
He knew no base design,
His eyes were dark and rather small,
His nose was aquiline.

He lived in peace with all mankind,
In friendship he was true,
His coat had pocket holes behind,
His pantaloons were blue.

Unharm'd, the sin which earth pollutes
He passed securely o'er,
And never wore a pair of boots
For thirty years or more.

But good Old Grimes is now at rest,
Nor fears misfortune's frown;
He wore a double-breasted vest,
The stripes ran up and down.

He modest merit sought to find,
And pay in its desert;
He had no malice in his mind,
Nor ruffles on his shirt.

His neighbor he did not abuse,
Was sociable and gay;
He wore large buckles on his shoes,
And changed them every day.

His knowledge, hid from public gaze,
He did not bring to view;
Nor make a noise town-meeting days,
As other people do.

His worldly goods he never threw
In trust to fortune's chances;
He lived (as all his brothers do)
In easy circumstances.

Thus undisturbed by anxious cares,
His peaceful moments ran;
And everybody said he was
A fine old gentleman.

RUNNING THE GAUNTLET.

BY CHAS. P. ILLSLEY.

THERE is nothing more fascinating to us than to sit down among a company of "old salts," and listen to the yarns they are so fond of spinning of their perils and adventures at sea. Therefore it is that we are a frequent evening visitor at the "Buoy and Anchor," a well-known tavern in the commercial town of ———, which is a general resort for the masters and mates when in port—a sort of Marine Exchange, where the web-footed gentry are wont to congregate and talk over the rates of freight, the state of foreign markets, the qualities of well-known vessels in the merchant service, and the results of late, and the prospects of anticipated voyages, the conversation gradually and almost invariably terminating in the relation, by one or the other of the

company, of his personal experiences when afloat, or the adventures of a shipmate, or of some interesting facts which he had picked up while drifting about the world.

In stormy weather it is generally "high change" at the Buoy and Anchor, and on one of the late disagreeable evenings we directed our steps thither, and took our accustomed seat around the ample hearth, from which a glowing sea-coal fire sent forth a cheerful, though fitful light. Of course, on such a night we found a full company. Among the party we recognized the same rugged forms, the same weather-beaten faces we have, year after year, been accustomed to meet; "regular diners" they are called, whose absence would be sadly missed. Indeed, some three or four of them have

come to be considered as fixtures, without which the old tavern would seem to be incomplete.

Having loaded our pipes—one is obliged to smoke in self-defence—and after the usual desultory remarks on the weather, etc., quite an animated discussion sprung up in relation to the exploits of Semmes in the late Rebellion, and finally settled down on the war of 1812. Touching this war one of the party related a story which he called "Running the Gauntlet," which we will give as nearly as possible in his own words. It being merely a relation of facts, there was, of course, no attempt at embellishment, which would have detracted from, rather than added to the interest of the narrative.

"I have a story to tell on this point," said Captain B——, "which you may rely on in every particular. The facts were related to me many years ago by Mr. S——, the only survivor of the affair, I believe, and who was the boy Billy, mentioned in the narrative."

Immediately after the declaration of war in 1812, our entire coast was swarming with British cruisers, and every craft that ventured outside was pounced upon by our watchful enemy, hawk-like, so that a coast-wise trip was, in fact, a complete running of the gauntlet, and he was a lucky fellow who escaped capture.

Notwithstanding the chances were so greatly against them, many there were who stood ready to risk the hazard in consideration of the immense profits reaped from a successful voyage. There was something, too, in the nature of the enterprise that suited well their daring character.

In the fall of the year, some three or four months after the declaration of war, a fleet of eight or ten sail, generally small craft, were fitted out at Salem by Willard Paul, and others, intended for the Philadelphia flour trade, Philadelphia flour at that time being the principal brand used. Among them was the schooner Fox, belonging to Mr. Willard, a well-known merchant in that day. The Fox was a little fore-and-after of about fifty tons. The full complement of her crew was three men and one boy, viz.: Samuel Hodgdon, master, George Heussler, mate, an old experienced pilot by the name of Eldridge, and the boy Bill. She was in ballast, save, stowed away in her run, was a

barrel of American gin, fresh and fiery from the still, without which, or something equally potent—for those were not strictly temperance times—no vessel's outfit was considered perfect. Thus manned and equipped, the Fox topped her boom and was off, with a fair wind and a good promise of a safe run; for a late arrival brought information that the bay was free from cruisers.

For three days the little craft went jauntily on her course unmolested, and at the close of the third, a clear sea still before them, they took a "pull at the peak" all round, for the successful prosecution of their voyage thus far. They were in the best possible humor, and the old pilot chuckled heartily at the thought of having given the "Britishers" the slip.

On the fourth morning they found themselves off Great Egg Harbor, and, greatly to their chagrin, in the close neighborhood of a strange sloop-of-war. Something very like an oath burst from the pilot's lips at the unwelcome sight. Running away was out of the question, and in answer to one or two rather pressing invitations, sent by a messenger that did not stand on forms and ceremonies, the Fox reluctantly hauled her wind and stood for the strange craft.

"Nabbed, by Jupiter!" said the old pilot, as he saw a boat lowered and put off from the cruiser filled with men.

In a short time Captain Hodgdon was politely informed, by a lieutenant in charge of the boat, that he was a prize to His Majesty's sloop-of-war Prometheus, seventeen guns, and that the company of himself and mate was particularly desired on board. There was no help for it, and the summons was at once obeyed. Mounting their captor's side they stepped on her deck, with feelings anything but agreeable, as you may well suppose.

They were immediately ordered aft, and scarcely had they doffed their tarpaulins to the representative of His Majesty than, true to his Yankee instincts, the skipper began to chaffer with his captor for the release of his craft. The commander at first would not listen to his propositions, but declared his intention to burn her forthwith. By dint of perseverance, however, the skipper prevailed upon him to come to terms, and the captor agreed, for a certain sum in specie, to permit the schooner to be ransomed.

Not having the funds on board, but being

provided with letters of credit, it was settled that Captain Hodgdon should land at Great Egg Harbor, draw on his owners, cash the bill, and return with the needful. Landing for that purpose, the captain found that he could not procure the specie until the next day. Much time was consumed in negotiating the bills, and it was late in the afternoon when the skipper returned. The commander agreed to wait until the next morning, threatening that if the money was not forthcoming by a certain hour in the forenoon, to "burn, sink and destroy," as his orders ran.

Captain Hodgdon and his mate were permitted to go on board their vessel for the night, which was in charge of a middy and nine men. During the night the two vessels were to lay off and on the harbor close in company, although, with such a force on board the schooner, not the least suspicion was entertained of an attempt at recapture.

The prospect was anything but cheering as the skipper stepped again on board his little craft, and he paced her deck in not the most amiable humor. Their capture was a bitter pill to all of them. Not relishing the idea, however, of making such an unprofitable voyage if the ransom money were paid, nor of seeing the Fox burned and themselves prisoners if it were not, Heussler, the mate, and the boy Bill laid their heads together to hatch a plan to retake the schooner; rather a formidable undertaking, it must be confessed, with ten armed men on board, and the guns of the sloop-of-war, like sleeping thunder, frowning upon them. Undeterred by the almost hopelessness of their task, Heussler and Bill arranged a plot, giving the captain and pilot a hint of their purpose.

Impatiently, and not a little anxiously, did the boy Bill wait for the approach of night, for on him alone depended the success of the plan they had matured. The responsibility was great, but he felt equal to the occasion. The sun at last disappeared, and as the evening shades began to gather about them, he set about the accomplishment of his task. At this time the two vessels had made considerable offing and were lying to, the sloop-of-war under reefed topsails, and the Fox immediately under her guns, with her helm lashed a-lee, her fore and mainsails trimmed close aft, and her jib hauled to windward.

About eight o'clock Heussler and the pilot

turned in, while the captain and the midshipman—a very gentlemanly young fellow, by the way—sat chatting together in the cabin over a dim light. The boy Bill, in the meantime, remained on deck with the man-of-war's men, who were clustered around the windlass cracking jokes, spinning yarns, and whiling away the time as best they could. Bill was squat among them, listening apparently with the liveliest interest to the stories of the old salts, occasionally throwing in a word, and laughing heartily at the relation of their adventures, most of which were of a humorous turn.

"Look here, you spawn of a Yankee!" said one of the men, as he wound up his yarn, "you have been sitting there this half-hour grinning like a chessy cat. Can't you lend a hand to help kill the time?"

"What can I do?" was Bill's laughing rejoinder.

"Have you never a plug of tobacco about you, youngster? I'm blest if I've not been on short allowance of tarred rope these two months or more!"

"I've none about me," said Bill; "but if I could get at the skipper's chest I might smuggle a bite for you. I'll tell you what, though," he continued, lowering his voice, "there's a barrel of prime gin in the hold, and if you'd like to wet your whistles, I guess I can hook a drop. The old man won't mind it, seeing's he'll get clear in the morning. How will that suit you?"

"Suit!" said an old sea-dog, his eyes snapping and his whole countenance betraying his satisfaction. "Yes, suit to a T!"

The proposition received the eager assent of all hands. A bucket and dipper were soon found, the hatches carefully removed, and Bill crept slyly into the hold after the coveted liquor, the men meanwhile raising their voices and walking about, agreeable to a hint given them to drown any noise Bill might make in securing the prize.

After awhile the youngster reappeared with the bucket well filled with gin, and a hearty swig was taken all around. It may well be supposed that such a rare opportunity was not permitted to pass unimproved, and the "main brace" was "spliced" pretty often. Old salts are proverbially a thirsty set, and it was not long ere soundings were found in the bucket. The sailors grew more voluble as the liquor disappeared, and many a tough story was recounted, each man the hero of his own tale. The liquor

being exhausted, more than one hint was given that a fresh nip would be acceptable.

"She's getting dry, my lad," said one, whose thickness of speech showed too plainly the effect of his potatoes; "the pump—hic—sucks. One more pull at the peak, my lad."

Bill demurred at first, but by repeated urging he at last consented to bring another bucket. It was brought, and Bill plied them so briskly that first one and then another keeled over, and ere long all were completely locked in a drunken sleep, helpless as so many dead men.

Having assured himself that there was no danger to be apprehended from his late boon companions, Bill crept aft and gave a preconcerted signal. Heussler immediately left his berth and sauntered on deck, having only a portion of his dress on, for fear of exciting the suspicion of the midgy, who sat half dozing over some newspapers the captain had furnished him with.

The first object of the mate and his young conspirator was to secure the arms of the sleepers, by which time the pilot also came on deck. With his assistance the men were securely bound and silently bundled down the fore peak.

"They sucked it down like milk," said Bill, with a chuckle.

This ticklish affair accomplished, Bill went into the cabin and managed to let the captain know how matters stood. Taking a pistol from the capacious pocket of his pea-jacket and cocking it, he coolly intimated to the astonished midgy that he was his prisoner, adding that he hoped he would make himself as comfortable as possible, and excuse him if he left him for the present, as his duties called him on deck. He then took his leave, taking the precaution to secure the cabin so as to prevent the prisoner from giving an alarm.

The chagrin of the midgy may be imagined at this unexpected announcement. He took the affair quite philosophically, however, and submitted with very good grace to the new order of things.

It was now getting towards midnight. Thus far everything had succeeded admirably; but the worst was yet to come. How to get away from their formidable neighbor was their next study. The Fox, you will remember, was lying directly under the sloop's guns, and if she attempted to escape, as the skipper had been forewarned, one

broadside would blow her out of the water, although the idea of her making such an attempt probably never entered her captor's head.

The first object of the skipper was to increase the distance between the two vessels. To accomplish this, the pilot cautiously assumed the helm, and by taking advantage of every favorable circumstance, dexterously yawing and filling, by degrees, and almost imperceptibly, he managed to widely separate the schooner from her captor.

Working along in this way until they got into the neighborhood of the Shoals off Cape May—the crew in the meantime having secretly got everything in readiness—the sails were suddenly trimmed to catch the breeze, and the skipper headed for shoal water. They had scarcely filled away when boom! came a gun from the sloop-of-war.

"Blaze away!" said the captain, exultingly. "It will require sharp eyes to hit the little Fox at this distance in the night!"

And blaze away they did, though every shot flew high over the fugitive, without the least damage to hull, spars or rigging.

Meanwhile, in an incredibly brief time, the sloop-of-war had packed on all sail and was bowling away directly in the wake of the runaway. The only chance of escape for the latter was to creep in among the shoals where her pursuer could not, from her draught, follow her. This she did, having a good start and being a rapid sailer, until the cruiser thought it prudent to haul off, finding that she could not cripple or overtake her.

The saucy Fox still kept on her course, running for the Rip-Raps, inside of which is a passage for vessels of light draught, while the Prometheus bore up, with the intention of running around the shoals and heading her off. But as the Fox had a straight cut, while her pursuer was compelled to take a roundabout passage, the former got the start and succeeded in getting safely into the Delaware. At New Castle was a depot of gunboats, stationed there to guard the mouth of the river. Running into this place, our Yankees delivered up their chop-fallen prisoners, and then proceeded to Philadelphia, not a little proud of their daring achievement.

The Fox remained about three weeks in Philadelphia, taking in a full cargo of flour, at the end of which time she was ready to start for Salem. Skipper Hodgdon, as may

well be supposed, felt no little anxiety about the trip. After the trick he had played upon the enemy, he knew it would be "all day" with him if he should again fall into their hands. He waited for a very dark night before he left the Delaware, for the purpose of escaping the cruisers which were prowling about the Capes, watching the mouth of the river as a cat watches a rat-hole, ready to pounce upon the first that ventured outside.

At last the evening came, dark as a pocket; thick clouds obscured the sky, and not a star to be seen—one of those nights when the darkness is almost palpable. With many misgivings they left the river, every eye and ear on the alert for sight or sound of the dreaded foe. A stiff breeze was blowing. The craft was in just the right trim. She was an excellent sailer, and you may be sure they packed everything upon her. Towards morning, having had a fine night's run, and there being no signs of the enemy, the skipper turned in, congratulating himself that he had, at any rate, slipped by one dangerous point, the one he had most dreaded.

The crew, as was natural, shared the anxiety of the skipper. They had not, it is true, much to lose, but they knew if they fell into the clutches of the foe, they would be doomed to a long imprisonment. And, by the way, the boy Bill had a taste of prison life before the war was over. For a long time he was confined in the famous Dartmoor prison, having been captured on board of one of the privateers fitted out on private account during the war. He was in Dartmoor at the time when the prisoners were fired upon and shot down in cold blood.

"The little Fox will baffle them this time," said the old pilot, exultantly, turning the enormous quid in his mouth, which he had been chewing with an avidity that too plainly betrayed the anxiety to which he was a prey. It is astonishing the quantity of tobacco a sailor will make way with when threatened by danger or pressed by unusual cares!

"Here, you shaver," he continued, addressing Bill, "keep your weather-eye open. Look sharp, youngster! it is getting towards daylight. Gin won't save us a second time. What awful gullets those fellows had!" he added, in a sort of parenthesis.

Bill needed no admonition. The idea of

being carried across the "big pond" and thrust into a crowded prison was anything but agreeable to him, and was sufficient to keep him on the alert. He kept his eyes constantly "peeled," and his glance took in the entire horizon almost at one and the same moment.

The day had barely dawned when Bill sung out, lustily, "Sail ho!" and sail ho! it was, sure enough; for, as the light increased, they found themselves close aboard of two large vessels, standing under easy sail on their weather-beam.

"It is all over with us!" said the pilot, with a muttered oath. "Ay, ay! growl away," he added, as the flash of a gun issued from the bow-port of the nearest and largest of the vessels, while its heavy report came booming over the waters.

"That means 'Come under my quarter,'" said the mate, gloomily. "Skipper ahoy! you're wanted on deck!" he shouted down the companion-way, arousing the captain from a very agreeable dream of sailing safely into the harbor of Salem.

Notwithstanding the significant hint thus given, the schooner continued on her course unmindful of the presence of her warlike neighbors, when another jet of flame shot from her bows, followed by a louder report, and a ball came skipping along, striking the water directly under the bowsprit and sending up a cloud of spray.

"Yes, yes! don't be in such a blessed hurry! The world wasn't made in a day!" growled the old pilot.

"Hard a-lee!" shouted the skipper, who had now come on deck. "It's of no use. Mr. Eldridge, the fates are against us. We must run under the big fellow's quarter."

The schooner was brought up in the wind, and was standing towards her captor.

"Schooner ahoy!" shouted a gruff voice from the gangway of the larger vessel, which proved to be the frigate *Belvidere*. "Your name and cargo?"

"Fox—of Salem—flour," was the brief response.

"Ay, ay!" was the rejoinder, which was in a few minutes followed by an order to drop alongside of her consort, which was a short distance to leeward, and discharge part of her cargo, reserving the balance for the frigate.

The feelings of our skipper may more easily be imagined than described when, on obeying the order, he found himself fastened

to his old captor, the *Prometheus*. Curses not a few were showered down upon him for the Yankee trick he had played them.

"We've got you now, my fine fellows, safe enough!" said one of the officers, who was superintending the tackle rigged for the discharge of the flour.

"Your jig is up, boys; salt won't save you this time," said another.

"Nor gin either," put in Bill, with a doleful grin.

"We've run the *Fox* down, despite its cunning and doubling," added a third.

And so the remarks ran on as they proceeded to transfer the flour from the schooner to the sloop-of-war, much to the disgust and annoyance of the Yankee crew. Previous, however, to the removal of the flour, six hammocks, with their bedding, from the sloop-of-war, were slung over the schooner's side as fenders to prevent chafing.

The crew of the *Fox* listened to the taunting remarks and jeers of their captors in silence, and doggedly assisted in breaking bulk, save now and then the old pilot grumbled out his spleen in anything but choice language, as he cast wolfy glances at the mass of grinning heads that peered down upon them from the railing of the enemy.

About thirty barrels of flour had been transferred from the schooner to the sloop, when the frigate, which was now some distance at the leeward, suddenly threw out a signal to the *Prometheus* to follow her in chase of a strange sail, apparently a large vessel, which had just hove in sight. Not stopping to take in the hammocks, but determined, at any rate, not to lose their prize a second time, they seized the schooner's cable around her foremast, and taking it on board the *Prometheus*, made it fast. They then ordered the skipper to make sail, threatening that if he attempted to escape to sink him on the instant.

It was not long before the *Prometheus* with the *Fox* in tow started in pursuit. The wind blew pretty fresh, and the schooner dashed along at a lively rate in the wake of her captor, her speed being such as to cause but little if any hindrance to the sloop.

It was past noon when the chase commenced, and for two or three hours the *Prometheus* and her prize dashed along in fine style, when thinking that now or never, if they intended it, was the time to effect an escape, Heussler, after consulting with the

captain, crept along on his hands and knees with a hatchet, and succeeded in cutting several of the strands of the cable which served as a tow-line, taking the precaution to leave the cut ends ragged, as though the cable had parted.

This accomplished, the two vessels stood on for a time as usual; but after a while the pilot managed, by yawing the schooner, to bring a pretty taut strain upon the cable. In a moment they had the satisfaction of seeing it snap like a thread. The schooner still stood on her course as if nothing had happened, so that if the "accident" should be discovered, there would be no suspicion of a design to take advantage of it to effect an escape. Somehow or other, however, the helmsman steered so wildly the sloop began to forge fast ahead. In this manner the captor and her prize stood on the same tack until the sun began to get low, by which time the former, by her superior sailing, had run herself nearly hull down.

"Nearly time to 'bout ship, skipper?" said the pilot, inquiringly. "It will take longer legs than that chap has got, to overhaul us now!"

"Ready about!" was the prompt rejoinder. And in a moment the *Fox* was on another tack, once more showing her heels to the enemy.

"Good-by, John!" sang out Billy, capering about the deck in high glee. "Go it, cripples!" he again shouted, as the *Fox* plunged into a wave, deluging the forward deck, the boy as well, in a mass of foam.

As the night fell the wind increased in violence, rendering it necessary to double-reef the sails. Before midnight a heavy gale was raging. The fugitives, however, still held on their way, until it was absolutely perilous to run any longer, when they were reluctantly compelled to lay to.

The wind blew furiously, and there was an ugly sea running, but the *Fox* was a noble sea-boat, and she rode it out bravely. To prevent her making too much lee-drift a drag was thrown over, which checked her falling off considerably. Throughout the night the gale continued with unabated fury, but so anxious were the Yankees to keep clear of their late captors they thought but little of the storm.

The long, disagreeable night slowly wore away, and when the morning broke so that objects could be discerned at any great distance, what should greet the eyes of the

weary watchers but the selfsame cruiser, still hovering like a phantom-ship around them. The vessel to which she gave chase probably proved to be one of their own cruisers, and she had put back, following the track of the Fox like a hound on the scent. The gale, however, brought her to bay, and when she was discovered, she was lying to under the snuggest canvas about two miles to leeward.

Fortunately for our friends the gale still continued, and the sloop made such lee-way that by noon, to the great relief of those on board the schooner, she had drifted out of sight. The weather moderating a little soon after, the skipper thought it best, although at some hazard, to push on, which he immediately did.

Making his way along as best he could, keeping an anxious lookout the while for his old enemy, by sundown Captain Hodgdon found himself off Montauk Point, intending to run into New London. Thinking it best, however, after so many narrow escape, to see if the coast were clear before him, Bill was sent to the masthead to reconnoitre. Shinning up the back-stay hand over hand, Bill had no sooner arrived at an altitude which afforded him a commanding view, than he bawled out:—

"Sail ho! sail ho!"

"Where away?"

"In the sound," shouted Bill. "By George, there's a whole fleet of 'em!"

True enough, there they were, a large squad of the enemy.

"We must run for Newport," said the skipper, fumbling his hair in a perplexed manner. "Are you acquainted along here, Mr. Eldridge?"

"Never was here before in my life, skipper; but we will try and feel our way along. We've got a good departure, and when we get hold of Point Judith Light, if the wind holds, I dare say we shall manage well enough."

At once the Fox was headed for Newport. The daylight soon faded away, and a night of pitchy darkness shut in. They were in a pokerish situation, to use the old pilot's phrase, a dark night, an unknown coast, and the sea swarming with enemies. However, there was no help for it.

"We're in a tight place," said the old pilot, "but we've squeezed out of tighter ones."

The wind had greatly moderated, and was

now rather light. The intense darkness, which was deemed so unfavorable, proved in the end their salvation, as we shall see. Feeling their way carefully, in good time Point Judith Light was made, which relieved their minds as to their whereabouts. Passing the light they ran in some distance and dropped their "mud-hook" off the town of South Kingston, not a little rejoiced at their supposed safety.

But secure as they deemed themselves, their perils were not yet over; for about daylight the next morning a boat came alongside, and a young man who was in it hailed the pilot, who happened to be the only one on deck.

"How did you get here, or rather why are you here?" he asked. "This is no place for you, sir."

"How did we get here, youngster?" said the old man, gruffly, want of rest having soured his usual good humor. "We didn't grow here, that's sartin! But what is it to you why we came or how we got here? I s'pose we've a right to be here?"

"Of course you have," said the young man, good-naturedly. "You need not lose your temper, old man; my only object is to serve you. Do you know that you are in a bad neighborhood?"

"In a bad neighborhood, say you, sir?" asked the skipper, who had come on deck, attracted by the strange voice.

"Yes sir, a very dangerous one," replied the young man. "An armed schooner, the Liverpool packet, of Halifax, lies at anchor just under the light. You must have run by her in the night. Lucky for you, sir, it was so dark. She has been prowling around here for some time, taking everything that comes along. I wonder how you kept out of their clutches."

"This is not safe anchorage, then?"

"If you know when you are well-off, skipper, you will not remain here long, but top your boom at once for Providence."

"Why not Newport?"

"Because you will not be safe there. A number of vessels have been cut out of Newport harbor lately. You cannot be off too soon, skipper, and if you wish for any assistance, I will help you get under way."

The young man's information and offer of assistance were thankfully received. All hands, that is the mate and Bill, were called, the anchor hove short, the sails hoisted, and in a short time, with a fair wind, the little

Fox, carrying a large sized bone in her mouth, was on her way heading for Providence, R. I.

After a fine run the jaunty craft entered the harbor in grand style, with all her bunting flying, and the six hammocks slung over her side, trophies of her gallant deeds.

In Providence Captain Hodgdon thought best to dispose of vessel and cargo rather

than run further risks, and a very profitable voyage he made of it, notwithstanding the loss of the thirty barrels of flour. Many congratulations did the skipper receive on his double escape. He subsequently learned that out of the fleet that sailed with the Fox from Salem only two others run the gauntlet, the remainder being taken and destroyed.

DIAMOND CUT DIAMOND.

BY MARGARET VERNE.

MR. CHARLES WESTLEIGH had spent the most of his life abroad, the first part of it in an English school, the five years succeeding his majority at a German university. During this latter residence he had acquired a good deal of useless information, a fine beard, an assortment of meerschaums, and a friend after the Teutonic style of *Bruderschaft*, that is to say, a friend between whom and himself was supposed to exist such affection and confidence as Damon and Pythias, Orestes and Pylades, Castor and Pollux never knew. This friend was a German, a count, of course, and, although not of course, almost as fine a fellow as Westleigh considered him. His name was Rupert von Bergmann, and his ambition was to pass for an Englishman, in which attempt he almost succeeded. Both young men were good-looking, brave, and not deficient in self-esteem. Bergmann was eight and twenty years old, his friend two years younger.

To the illustrious German, smoking furiously and amusing his leisure with a volume of Kant, entered Westleigh with an open letter in his hand.

"My friend," said he, "I am summoned home. You must go with me."

"Home, to America?" inquired the count, hardly looking up.

"Yes. My sister will be eighteen next month and our property is to be settled. My uncle, her guardian, has written to summon me."

"Your sister lives with her uncle, does she not?" asked the count, closing Kant with a sigh.

"Yes. You know I showed you a letter from her the other day, as a good specimen of English composition."

"I remember. But you spoke of her as a child, I thought."

"True. I had forgotten the lapse of time. She is, it seems, a young woman, and my uncle mentions her as beautiful and attractive. Bergmann, she shall marry you, and make our friendship a brothership in reality."

"Are not we brothers already?" asked the German; adding, rather dubiously, "and a wife for either of us might disturb the dual unity of our love. She would be a third, and three is the number of division but not of harmony."

"She will not be a third," replied Westleigh, tranquilly. "Her existence will be merged in the stronger natures of her husband and brother. She will merely be the invisible cement consolidating our union."

The two young men embraced, "*ala mode Germanorum*," and the affair was settled.

"What is the name of our little *fraulein*?" asked Bergmann.

"Charlotte. My mother named both her children for their father, whom she adored."

"Is it a propensity of the family?" modestly inquired the German.

"To adore their husbands? I think it is; at any rate, Charlotte will adore you, my Bergmann."

The young men embraced again.

Two months later, Damon and Pythias left the railway train at a quiet New England station, and entered a carriage in

waiting. A smiling lad, black as the ace of spades, sat in front and drove a pair of admirable horses.

"It is one of the aborigines, the original lords of the soil, is it not?" asked Bergmann, in German.

"No, I think not. The Indians are called red men. This is a negro, an African, you know."

Meantime he asked of the sable subject of discussion:—

"Are the family of my uncle well, my lad?"

"Yis, sir. De major am fus'rate, but he done gone away. Be home 'fore to-morrow night, he say. De young ladies berry well, too, t'ank you, sah."

"The young ladies?" asked Charles, rather uneasily. "Who is there at the house beside my sister, Miss Westleigh?"

"Dere's Miss Westleigh ag'in, sah?"

"Miss Westleigh again? What, another Miss Westleigh?"

"Yis, sah; de major's darter, sah."

"Oh, my cousin, I suppose. I had forgotten that I had one. Is Miss Charlotte well?"

"Bof of 'em, sah."

"Both what?"

"Bof Miss Charlie, sah."

"What, is Major Westleigh's daughter named Charlotte, as well as my sister?"

"Yis, sah," replied Ebony, grinning widely.

"Good heavens! And how do you distinguish them? How are they called, I mean?"

"De major call 'em Mouse an' Tiny. We calls 'em Miss Charlie."

"What, both of them Miss Charlie?"

"Yis, sah."

"How singular!" murmured Westleigh; and after a moment of uneasy reverie, added in German to his friend:—

"Suppose, dear Bergmann, you should like my cousin best?"

"Never!" exclaimed the German, passionately. "What is the love of woman to thy love, my friend? Remember, the *fraulein* Charlotte is dear to me already, as being your sister, and but that she is that, I should probably never implore her to become my wife. The other is nothing, can be nothing to me. It may be you will love her yourself, my Charles."

"It may be," replied Westleigh, complacently. "You promise me, then, that you

will woo my sister only, and not my cousin?"

"I swear it to you, Charles."

Snowball, whose eyes had expanded to twice their natural dimensions while listening to the unknown and fearful tones issuing from those bearded lips, now turned hastily into a long avenue, and drove up at furious speed. A quarter of a mile brought the carriage to the front of a large and handsome country house, illuminated along its whole facade.

"It is in your honor, Bergmann," said Charles, in pleased surprise.

"The *fraulein* could not have known of our intentions with regard to her?" asked the count, quite flattered with surprise and pleasure.

"Pardon, Rupert, but I gave her one little hint in writing to announce our approach."

"The illumination, then, may be a maiden's shy acceptance of a proffered lover," murmured the count, following his friend up the steps and into a large, old-fashioned hall, crowded with so strange a group of revelers that both young men stopped upon the threshold, uncertain whether or not to enter. The doubt was removed by a page, dressed in blue velvet, white satin and silver ornaments, with a cap and plume set jauntily upon his crisp curls, and a mask covering the upper part of his face, who came skipping forward to receive them.

"Welcome, gentlemen," said he, bowing low; "my mistress holds revel to-night, as you see, but she hath bid me greet you in her name, and marshal you to your apartments. She hopes as soon as you are refreshed that you will join us in the hall."

"A masked ball! Are we in Paris, or have we slipped back into the middle ages, and lighted upon a veritable castle with its squires and dames?" asked Bergmann, looking about him in bewilderment.

"It goes with the illumination. It is a device of our little Charlotte to avoid meeting you face to face," replied Westleigh, in German; and then courteously answering the page's invitation, the young gentlemen followed him to two handsome and adjoining chambers, where he left them.

A hasty toilet concluded, the friends lost no time in presenting themselves below stairs, where they found the page awaiting them.

"Shall I present you to my mistress?" asked he.

"By all means. But which of the young ladies acts the part of mistress in this enchanted scene?" replied Westleigh, looking towards the upper end of the hall, where stood a female figure dressed in the robes of a chatelaine, with a bunch of keys and an embroidered purse at her girdle, and with a long gold chain with a cross at the end suspended from her neck. Her face was covered with a velvet mask, but her air was at once dignified and gracious, well befitting her position. Behind her stood a lady-in-waiting, with whom she occasionally spoke in whispers.

"Which young lady? Why, the true mistress, of course, good sir," replied the page, saucily, and threading the gay groups of maskers, he presently brought the guests close to the chatelaine, to whom he presented them as, "Two travelers anxious to join our revels, your ladyship."

"They are welcome. You have traveled far, gentlemen," replied the hostess, graciously, but not offering a hand to either.

"We have, indeed, and are highly flattered by our reception," replied Westleigh, trying to divine whether this was his sister or his cousin.

"You are very welcome," replied the hostess again, and then turned to greet her other guests.

"When you cannot get the mistress it is well to take up with the maid, and here is as pretty a one as you will find in the New World," said the page, pulling the two gentlemen by the sleeve and pointing to the lady-in-waiting, who seemed attentively regarding them through her mask.

"Let me present you," continued he. "Fair Mistress Gillian, here are two gentlemen, come all the way from Germany to kiss your hand. Welcome them."

"Your nimble tongue can speak for both of us, Master Roland," replied the maid, laughing, as she drew a step nearer. "But, indeed, gentlemen, you are heartily welcome, both of you."

"This must be my sister. My cousin would, of course, act the hostess in her father's house," said Westleigh, aside; and then continued aloud:—

"Thanks, fair lady, for the welcome; and if you are whom I suspect, I shall yet claim a warm greeting. Meanwhile, allow me to present my friend, the Count von Bergmann, to your especial notice."

The count bowed until his lips touched the

little white hand presented to him, and Westleigh withdrew a few steps, wishing to encourage a conversation between the two destined for each other.

The sprightly page was at his elbow.

"Take care what you are about," said he, in a tone of playful menace. "That lady is already appropriated. Do not allow your bearded friend to become too much interested in her."

Westleigh stared at him in dismay.

"What do you mean?" exclaimed he. "Is not that young lady Miss Charlotte Westleigh?"

"Hush, sir! not so loud. Yes, that is the lady's name, except for to-night," said the page, more seriously.

"And who presumes to such a claim upon her, prior to that of her own brother?" asked Westleigh, indignantly.

"Who? I myself. Have you anything to say in opposition, my lord brother?" retorted the page, in the same tone.

"That remains to be seen, friend page. In the first place, allow me to inquire your name."

"Roland. No matter for the rest now."

"Very well; but please to remember that I am Miss Westleigh's brother, and natural controller of her destiny."

"Indeed! And might I inquire in what manner you have decided it?" asked the page, sarcastically.

"She is to marry the Count von Bergmann, the gentleman at present conversing with her, apparently to their mutual satisfaction."

"So much to the lady's satisfaction that if I, at this moment, went and asked her to leave him and promenade with me she would do so; or if I asked for the ring off her finger, or the flower from her bosom, she would give it me," said the page, with an easy assurance of manner, in the highest degree irritating to Westleigh.

"I do not believe you," exclaimed he, rudely; "and I call upon you to prove your words. Miss Westleigh wears, I perceive, a bunch of forget-me-nots at the throat, out of compliment to the count, I do not doubt. Come with me and ask her to give them to you in his presence, if you dare."

"I will do more," replied Roland, tranquilly; "I will ask her to kiss them, and then to fasten them in the buttonhole of my doublet. Will that satisfy you of our good understanding?"

Speechless with rage, Charles replied by a fierce gesture and strode towards his sister, followed by the page, beneath whose mask could be perceived a sudden access of color. Coming close to the lady-in-waiting, who was carrying on a very animated conversation with the count, he paused a moment, then kneeling before her, said:—

"Sweet Gillian, I beg a boon for fair love's sake. Is it granted?"

"What is it, saucy page?"

"I long for the blue forget-me-nots upon your bosom. Kiss them once, and then fasten them above my heart. Remember all they mean."

Westleigh clenched his hand and frowned heavily, while the count started, stepped hastily forward, then recollecting himself stood in suspense, staring at Gillian, who without a word unfastened the flowers, pressed them to her lips, then stooping over the still kneeling page, thrust the stems through the buttonhole of his doublet, saying:—

"There, silly boy, now begone."

"Thanks, dearest." And the page, seizing the little hand, kissed it, pressed it to his heart, and rising turned to Westleigh.

"Are you convinced?" asked he.

Charles did not at once reply, but after standing for a moment looking from one to another of the little group, he laid a heavy hand upon Bergmann's arm, and said in German, while pointing to the page:—

"You or I must kill that boy. She loves him."

Bergmann looked at the object of his friend's wrath, as he stood whispering with Gillian.

"Poor boy!" muttered he. "It is but a childish fancy. We will cure her of it; say nothing more to-night. This masquerade alters everything; wait until morning shows every one in his true light. I am going to talk to our hostess, who is at present disengaged. Amuse yourself also, my friend."

"Remember your promise. The hostess is my cousin, no doubt."

"I shall remember," said the count, briefly. And Charles, planting himself in a corner, remained a silent and somewhat gloomy spectator of the scene, while Bergmann made himself agreeable to the hostess, and Roland and Gillian glided away in an interminable waltz.

Before the guests had all retired, the two friends, weary and somewhat disgusted with

the opening of their campaign, sought their chambers and their rest.

The next morning broke clear and lovely, and Bergmann rising early for a morning stroll found his friend awaiting him. They descended the stairs together, and in the hall, whence all trace of the late revel had been removed, they found a fine, hearty old gentleman striding up and down with a brace of dogs at his heels. He came forward at once, holding out both hands and saying, cheerily:—

"Good-morning, my lads. Glad enough to see you, Charles, and your friend as well. I was sorry not to meet you last night, but—why, Charley, you are the image of your father, boy! Brings the poor fellow back like yesterday. Well, well! Have you seen the girls yet?"

"I can hardly say, sir," replied Westleigh, somewhat embarrassed. "You know last night no one appeared in their own character, and"—

"Yes, yes, I see," interrupted the old gentleman, laughing heartily. "Well, they have just gone out to the garden to compare their own roses with nature's, I suppose. Come along and we will find them. This way, Mr. Bergmann."

And nothing loth the young men followed to a quaint, old-fashioned garden, full of hollyhocks and tiger lilies, pansies and mignonette, love-lies-bleeding and ragged-robin, with many another bloom dear to our ancestors. Here among the roses they found two living flowers who came laughing to meet them.

"There they are, the two Charlies. One is your sister and the other your cousin, my lad, so you need not be particular which you kiss first," said the uncle, laughing more than ever, as he clapped Bergmann on the shoulder.

Westleigh, meantime, accepted the challenge with great alacrity, and having saluted both young ladies, stopped to look at them. Both were pretty, one with hazel eyes, and rippling bright brown hair, a saucy nose, and dimpled mouth, the other in the Madonna style, and yet with a lurking gleam of mischief in her great blue eyes that might carry her quite as far as her cousin's outspoken daring. To her Charles turned with outstretched arms.

"This is my sister," said he. "A brother's heart cannot mislead him."

"Why, how could you possibly tell,

cousin? I thought you would take me for Mouse, and we should have such fun," pouted hazel-eyes; adding, after a moment's reflection, "I have it. You knew her last night, and you remember her figure and the lower part of her face."

"Well, yes, to be quite frank, Cousin Charlotte, that is just the way I recognized her," admitted Charles, with a laugh, in which all the party joined right merrily.

"But you are not to call me Cousin Charlotte. I am Charlie, or if you like it better, Tiny; and your sister is also Charlie, otherwise Mouse," said the merry little beauty, as soon as she could speak.

"Very well, then, let me present my friend Bergmann to my cousin and sister Charlie, otherwise Mouse and Tiny, and bespeak for him all the affection I shall allow either of them to offer any one but myself."

And Charles Westleigh looked meaningly into his sister's blue eyes, while Tiny exclaimed merrily:—

"Indeed! And how do you know how many other people we have learned to like while you two gentlemen were stupefying yourselves at Gottingen?"

"That reminds me to inquire for a young gentleman whose acquaintance we made last night, and who declined to give any other name than Roland. He is not here this morning, I suppose?" said Charles, still looking meaningly at his sister, who blushed vividly, while her cousin pertly replied:—

"It is not the fashion in America for gentlemen to make calls before breakfast, and you will not find Roland less than the world of fashion."

"Come, children; the bell rings, and I want my breakfast sadly. Time enough for nonsense afterwards. Come along"; and Mr. Westleigh led the way to the house, followed by the four young people, jesting and laughing.

After breakfast came croquet, and Bergmann with quiet Mouse for a partner was beaten by Charles and Tiny, until the latter threw down her mallet and proposed a ride.

The liberal stables afforded a mount for the whole party, and they cantered down the avenue, Charles and Tiny leading, and the others following somewhat silently.

"Do you know, Charles, I like Mr. Bergmann ever so much better than I do you?" began Tiny. "He isn't so cross and pe-
riple. You and I will quarrel fearfully

if we are together long. I am convinced of it."

"Are you? I dare say you are quite right, but in the end, my charming cousin, it is always the stronger nature that conquers. Did not you know that?" asked Charles, jestingly, yet not without meaning.

"So that I should come off victorious, you mean?" rejoined Tiny, provokingly. "Well, I dare say it would be so, but I do not like you any the better for that. Now with Mr. Bergmann I should never quarrel."

"What a pity he seems insensible to your admiration. He is already quite devoted to my sister, whom in the end he will marry," said Charles, with exasperating coolness.

"Will he, really? And Roland?" inquired Tiny, flashing a saucy glance into her cousin's eyes.

"Confound Roland. If he comes between me and my plans he will be very apt to get crushed," replied Charles, viciously.

"Will he? Dear me! Poor boy, some one ought to mention it to him," laughed Tiny.

"I think so, also. Will not you be the fair envoy? You seem so interested for him."

"I am, indeed. I am afraid I love him as much as Charlie does," said Tiny, suddenly serious and sighing deeply. Charles looked at her earnestly.

"Do you really care for him, cousin?" asked he, presently.

"Indeed I do; very, very much," replied Tiny, sadly.

"And he for you?"

"Yes—that is—how can you ask me, Charles? But I am sure he cared for me more than for any one before he knew Mouse. Now I cannot tell which he loves the best. I wish I knew."

And Tiny sighed profoundly.

"Poor Charlie! If my sister has stolen your lover she shall restore him to you immediately. It is well that I came when I did," exclaimed Westleigh, with an imperial air.

"And please will you put her in the corner for an hour, and not let her have any sugar to her bread and butter at tea?" asked Charlie, eagerly, and fixing her lustrous eyes full upon her cousin.

"You laugh at me when I am trying to help you," said the young man, reproachfully.

"Forgive me. But it is so nice to know that I am to have Roland back again, and all to myself. Oh, I hope he never will love any one but me again—we shall be so happy by ourselves."

And Tiny, without the slightest apparent cause, burst into a ringing laugh, struck her horse smartly with the whip, and galloped along the hard and level road at a pace far exceeding any that Westleigh felt at all disposed to rival. He turned to his friend, who with difficulty restrained his eager horse:—

"You like riding fast, Bergmann," said he, "and I do not. Ride on, please, with my cousin, and I will take your place beside Charlie."

The count obeyed with alacrity, and Charles, accommodating his horse's pace to the gentle amble of his sister's pony, devoted himself to becoming acquainted with her, wisely leaving the vexed question of her preference for Roland, the interloper, until another opportunity.

Mouse-Charlie, at first a little timid, and very much upon her guard with the brother who had already shown himself so arbitrary and violent, no sooner found that he was disposed to be amiable, than she expanded like a flower, and chatted away in a style almost as sprightly and far more deferential and amiable than that of her cousin. Charles was delighted, and silently assured himself that so sweet and gentle a girl must be also docile, and that he should, after all, find no trouble in persuading her to give up Roland and accept Bergmann, and that the surest way to gain his point was by working upon her affection for Tiny-Charlie.

"What a tiny girl our cousin is," began he, carelessly.

"Just like sunshine. Oh, she is the dearest little creature in the world when you know her," replied Mouse-Charlie, enthusiastically.

This was well, and Charlie went on boldly:

"Charlie," said he confidentially, "I have discovered a secret, which I think is unknown even to you. Our cousin loves this Roland."

Mouse turned her head and made no reply. After a moment Charles continued:—

"Indeed, I am sure of it. She owned it to me. Now, Charlie, dear, I am sure you will not stand in her way if you can help it. Will you?"

"No, Charles," meekly replied Mouse, but still not looking him in the face.

"That's a good girl. Then you will give up all idea of Roland for yourself?"

"I shall always be very fond of him," said Mouse, plaintively.

"Yes, but—in fact you will not marry him, or give him any hope that you will do so? Promise me that, Charlie, as a proof that you indeed care for your brother's wishes and happiness."

"Yes, Charles, I will promise you so much." And Mouse-Charlie at last raised her soft blue eyes, and fixed them candidly upon those of her brother. He smiled approval.

"That is all settled then, dear. And I, on my part, will give up my own pretensions to my cousin's hand, and help her to be happy with her chosen lover, although I must say"—

He was silent, and after a moment Mouse quietly remarked:—

"I did not know, Charles, that you had any pretensions to your cousin's hand."

"Not pretensions exactly, perhaps," replied the young man, a little confused.

"But I thought it very likely, I might fall in love with her, while Bergmann—and that we might marry at last."

"And now you don't think you will?" inquired Mouse, with an air of angelic innocence.

"No—that is, of course she is a very nice girl and all that, but I don't fancy quite so much noise and demonstration. She is always bursting out in unexpected places like a heap of fireworks accidentally ignited. She makes me nervous. But, of course, Mouse, all this is strictly between ourselves. I would not for the world have her know."

"Know that you have concluded not to marry her, do you mean?" asked Mouse, serenely.

"Of course not, child. No matter what I meant, only don't repeat a word of it."

"No, brother," replied Mouse, meekly. Charles felt disposed to kiss her. He did exclaim:—

"What a nice girl you are, Charlie. I only wish the other were more like you."

"Would you marry her, then?" asked Mouse.

"Perhaps. But was it she who played hostess last night?"

"You would not have thought she could do it so well, should you?" exclaimed Mouse, with animation. "But Tiny is such a capital actress."

"No, I should not have supposed she could keep still so long," said Charles, coolly. And the conversation insensibly took another turn, and became so absorbing that Charles never perceived that they were returning homewards until his horse stopped in front of the house, and Tiny from the top of the steps called to her cousin:—

"Come, Charlie, it is just dinner-time." The two girls ran into the house, and Juba, the black boy, took away the horses.

"You are a fortunate fellow, Bergmann," said Westleigh, with enthusiasm, as they went to their rooms. "My sister is really a lovely girl."

"Certainly. And I also must congratulate you. Your cousin and fiancée is a veritable enchantress. She is full of witchery. You will love her to distraction, directly."

"I think not," replied Charles, uneasily. "And, Bergmann, take care that you do not either."

"My friend," said the German, a little sternly, "you need not so often remind me of my promise. It is sacred, and I should not wish to suppose you could doubt my truth or my honor."

Again the two embraced, *a la mode Germanorum*, and then went to wash their hands for dinner.

The next three weeks passed like a dream of delight. The four young people were together, or, when they occasionally paired off, it was generally Tiny and the count who undertook some active and daring feat, while Charles and his sister sat placidly in the drawing-room, or strolled along the shady paths of wood, or garden, sometimes reading, sometimes talking, but always finding their tastes identical, and their pleasures the same.

But Bergmann grew more and more moody, fitful and despondent. At last came the crisis. Bergmann, after an evening upon the lake, when he had rowed Tiny in a wherry, while Charles and Mouse drifted quietly in a dory, and read Tennyson by moonlight, detained his friend out of doors as the ladies bade them good-night, and after several futile attempts to speak, groaned out:—

"My Charles, I am a dishonored wretch. I no longer have a place among men. Kill me, I beg of you. You have the right. Take the life I have disgraced, or if you will not do that, suffer me to creep away to hide myself in a foreign land."

"Bergmann! What is this!" exclaimed Charles, himself as white and as discomposed as his friend.

"I have broken my promise," groaned the count, smiting his forehead with his clenched hand. "I do not love your sister, sweet and gentle maiden though she is, and I adore your cousin to that extent that I can no longer conceal the infamous treachery from her, or you, or myself. I do not ask pardon, Charles; you cannot give it yet. But I go—I fly—and after I am forgotten by her, and after you are assured of the unutterable bliss of calling her your own, perhaps you may forgive and pity the wretch who will by then be dead to earth as to you."

He was literally rushing away, with what purpose Heaven only knows, when Charles caught him by the arm, passed his own through it, and walked along beside him in silence. At last he said:—

"Bergmann, I too have been disappointed. I do not love Tiny as I expected. I have never fancied her from the first, and besides, she is in love with the young man whom we saw on our arrival here. He has gone away, they tell me, but he will doubtless return."

"She does not love him—she told me so this very night," passionately interposed Bergmann.

"Oh, you have spoken to her, then?"

"Pardon, pardon, my friend!"

"But why feel so distressed, Bergmann? If she loves you and you her I shall not stand between you, of course," said Charles magnanimously. "Besides, I have concluded that I shall not find another woman to suit me as Mouse does, and she is my sister. We shall live together, and neither of us marry. In fact it is arranged."

"Oh, you have spoken to her, then?" echoed Bergmann; and the two young fellows suddenly clasped and shook each other's hands, laughing merrily, at the double confession so oddly brought about.

The next morning after breakfast, Bergmann and Westleigh requested an interview with Major Westleigh, who received them in his study. Their errand was made known with as little delay as possible.

The old man laughed aloud, and rang the bell.

"Ask the young ladies to come here directly," said he, to the servant who answered it.

Five minutes passed, and the young ladies appeared, Mouse looking remarkably innocent, Tiny a little scared.

Major Westleigh taking each by an arm stationed them in the middle of the room, then resumed his official armchair with a very poor pretence of severity.

"Come, now, you gypsies," said he, "it is time to put a stop to all this nonsense. Niece Charlie, go and give your hand to your brother Charles."

"But he don't like me, he said he didn't," pouted Tiny, sidling up to Charles, and looking malicious fun in his face.

"There, Nephew Charles," proceeded the uncle, "that is your sister, my word for it. Now if you choose to give her to Mr. Bergmann do it. It is your own affair, for you know him better than I do."

"This, my sister!"

"That, my friend's sister!" exclaimed Bergmann. And without waiting for a formal surrender, seized Tiny in his arms, and sealed the compact of betrothal with a rapturous kiss.

"And Mouse is not my sister, after all?" gasped Charles.

"Not in the least," quietly replied his uncle.

"Then may she—O Mouse, will you—you know it was all settled that we were to live together—you won't refuse to live with me as my wife instead of my sister, will you?" stammered Charles.

"Especially after your goodness in settling the whole thing before ever you came here," suggested Mouse, with the most charming simplicity of tone, and the merriest malice of glance. But she did not repulse him when he proceeded to follow Bergmann's example, and the major, complacently rubbing his hands and looking from one couple to the other, presently remarked:—

"Well, as the girls seem to find themselves tolerably contented, young gentlemen, I do not know that I need object, although really"—

"But Roland?" asked Charles, some minutes later.

"It was I!" murmured Tiny, penitently.

"And the chatelaine?"

"Was the housekeeper. Don't be vexed, dear; uncle knew all about it."

"Yes," interposed the major. "The truth of the matter is, Charles, that the girls were half amused and half provoked at the confident style of your letter, and at finding themselves disposed of without their own consent, so they got up the masquerade, and in fact the whole affair to mystify and tease you. I helped, partly for love of them and partly for love of fun; but the jest has gone far enough now, and I am rather relieved to find it ending so satisfactorily. So now to luncheon. All this talking has made me fearfully thirsty, and even turtle-doves feed occasionally. Come, my children."

OUTSIDE THE BAR.

BY JESSIE M. E. SAXBY.

OUTSIDE the Bar, amid the breaking surges,

By mighty winds capriciously misled;
Toy of the tempest god who madly urges
The ship toward yon reef that lies ahead.
Beset by Night, whose darkling clouds are driven
Across a sky that shows no friendly star,
With rudder broken, and with canvas riven,
How will she reach her goal within the Bar?

Outside the Bar, like some great soul in sorrow,
The laboring bark bemoans the bitter hour,
And her brave crew, with longings for the morrow,
Toil through the night against the tempest's power.
Ah! can she conquer when each giant billow
Has roused itself man's handiwork to mar?
Their angry crests afford no restful pillow
To one who longs for peace within the Bar.

Outside the Bar the storm-fiends, wildly mocking
At human weakness, rave in accents rude;
While in their ruthless grasp the ship is rocking,
A prey to every demon's changeful mood.
The way to port is through those breakers standing
Like foemen sentinels in time of war,
Their iron-clad and hostile forms commanding
The haven of her hopes within the Bar.

Outside the Bar the ocean voices thunder,
And Night bends over all her deathly frown;
Within the Bar some tender hearts do wonder
If ships will find their refuge near the town.
Now, for the sake of those our spirits cherish,
Who tows upon tempestuous seas afar,
Pray that the bark beleaguered may not perish,
But anchor safely yet within the Bar.

OUR YOUNG FOLKS' STORY-TELLER.

YELLOWFOOT.

BY LOUISE DUPER.

"**I** CAN'T bear it any longer!" sobbed Syl, rubbing her little blue check sleeve across her eyes. "Everybody scolds me so hard, and everybody is so cross. Nobody cares for me a bit, and I'm going to run away! If I do the least thing, they all cry out, 'Oh, what a bad child!' Debby said she shouldn't wonder if I came to the gallus, 'cos I got into such a passion about having my hen sold this morning. O my poor old Yellowfoot!" And the remembrance of this most grievous of her wrongs brought a fresh burst of tears, and the rickety old back doorsteps whereon she was sitting threatened to come down every time a great sob shook her plump little body.

It was very pleasant and bright there in the backyard, where the fowls were all congregated, keeping up their contented gabble in the sunshine. There were Goldneck, and Silverwing, and Cripplecrown, and Speckle, with their numerous half-grown sons and daughters. There were saucy Redcap and domineering old Roundrobin, their two husbands, who, every now and then, when they thought their garrulous wives were making themselves heard more than was necessary, stretched their long necks and gave utterance to deafening sounds to drown them out. Syl usually delighted in the society of these feathered friends, but she could not bear to look at them now, for Yellowfoot was missing. Yellowfoot, who was by far the most fascinating of the flock, with her shining black dress, her pert little head with its jaunty little cap, which she used to cock so knowingly first on one side and then on the other, and her dainty little yellow legs and feet that looked as though they were encased in the finest of kid. Then, besides, she was Syl's own hen; at least, she had always considered her as her property. She took a fancy to her in her chickenhood and had always been allowed to call her her own; and no one had made any objections to her claiming that industrious biddy's eggs. She was very eccentric in her chickenhood, and wasn't considered quite as

promising as her brothers and sisters. Indeed, Debby went so far as to say that she was weak-headed; and at last she got the name of the "crazy chicken." She had a singular fancy for turning somersets when she first came out of the shell; then she used to be seized with sudden desires for flight, and would astonish her sedate old mother beyond measure by starting up without any warning to chase an imaginary fly from one corner of the yard to the other, leaving the rest of the brood peeping in timid surprise from under the parent wing. But though she did have such a desire to use her legs, they did not seem to serve her very well, for, after running a while in a very unsteady manner, she used to topple over headlong, and often made many vain attempts to pick herself up again. Her mother did not approve of her eccentric habits, by any means; and after remonstrating long and gravely on the subject, finally gave up in despair and disowned her entirely. But Syl liked her better than any chicken she ever saw, because she was so funny; and when her mother forsook her, and she went peeping desolately about the barnyard, Syl cared for her. She warmed her little downy body in her own tender hands, and every night put her into a tiny basket beside the kitchen hearth and covered her with cotton wool, where, after a few satisfied chirps, chickie wandered away into as fair a chicken dreamland as was found by those who were tucked under their mother's breast in the barn. So she grew and thrived, and bade fair to become a right-minded hen; and instead of calling her the crazy chicken, they called her Syl's chicken; and Syl, who named all the fowls, called her "Yellowfoot," and was very proud of her. Everybody acknowledged her beauty and worth as she grew older. Her brothers and sisters were glad to admit her back into their circle, though her mother, Mrs. Blackbill, still regarded her with rather puzzled, suspicious looks, and was wont to be rather meditative in her society. The roosters

were all zealous to scratch up a nice bit for her, and Debby declared that she was going to be a wonder for laying!

"Well," said Syl, "she would have been dead long ago if it hadn't been for me; and I'm going to have her for mine."

She and Yellowfoot were very intimate. Yellowfoot would come at her call, no matter how far away she was, and she used to fly of her own accord upon Syl's shoulder; and when Syl stroked her glossy back, or fed her with some dainty bit from the table, she expressed her satisfaction in the most musical of hen language. She rarely wandered away into the meadow with the other hens, but kept about the back door, where she could peep in at the folks in the kitchen, and made herself a sly little nest under the currant bushes, where she deposited an egg every day. Syl grew more and more attached to her as time went on; and what was her dismay, on coming home from a pilgrimage in the woods one morning, to find that she had been sold, together with a half dozen chickens, to Deacon Smith, who had taken a sudden fancy for poultry raising!

She missed her hen at once, and after she had searched and called in vain for some time, her mother told her what had happened. For a moment Syl stood transfixed with surprise; then she gave vent to her grief and indignation in a stream of tears and reproaches.

What right had anybody to sell her hen when she was gone, she would like to know? her own Yellowfoot, who knew her and liked her so much, and she liked her better than anything—better than anybody on the place.

"Why, Syl," said her mother, a meek, hard-worked woman, who had so much care that she hadn't time to pay much attention to her little girl, anyway, "I knew you liked the hen, but I thought you'd rather sell her, as the deacon offered such a good price for her. There are plenty of chickens that are going to be prettier hens than she is, and you may have any one of them you want to take her place. The deacon took a fancy to her because she was so black, and he wouldn't have any other. He says black hens are the best for laying."

"I won't have any other hen!" screamed Syl, stamping her foot. "But I will have Yellowfoot! Deacon Smith shall give her up! She was stolen from me, and I will tell him so!"

Poor Syl! she hardly knew what she was saying. She wasn't a very passionate little girl as a general thing; but now she was angry more than grieved, at least she was for a time, and she went about stamping and screaming in a manner that was quite dreadful to behold. She felt that she had been cruelly wronged, and that life wasn't anything at all without the presence of Yellowfoot.

Syl was what they called at the farmhouse an odd child, and nobody had much opinion of her. She was naughty very often, and did not seem to have much affection for anybody. She wasted all her love on calves and cats and dogs and chickens, and remained in their company the most of the time. But the truth of the matter was that she was very shy and lonely. Everybody in the house was too busy to pay any attention to her, except to scold her if she were in the way. Her brother Will was too big, and had too great a contempt for girls to lend her his society; she had no sisters, and there wasn't a child in the neighborhood for her to play with. So, from being much alone, she grew queer and morbid; but she had the warmest, best little heart in the world.

The loss of Yellowfoot grew more and more unendurable as her anger began to cool. Debby had called her to dinner a half hour ago, but she said that she didn't want any dinner, and would not go into the house to eat it; whereupon Debby indulged in some—anything but flattering—remarks concerning her, in her hearing, and Syl sat on the rickety doorsteps, still considering her wrongs.

More than once in her life, when Debby had been unusually cross, and her mother had scolded her, Syl had contemplated running away; and now she was determined to do so. Almost everybody would be kinder to her than they were at home, and she would not stay there any longer. She had two dollars that Uncle Ben gave her on her birthday, up-stairs, and ten cents besides, that Will gave her for a piece of old iron which she found. She would go to Deacon Smith's and get Yellowfoot, in the first place, and then she would go to the city and seek her fortune, like a boy that she had been reading about only last night. She thought she should like to wear her Sunday dress, but it would not do for her to put it on, for Debby would be sure to spy her when

she went out—there was nothing but what Debby saw; and then she would be sure to meet Will or Sam somewhere on her way, and if she were to be so fine they would suspect something. She tucked her best white apron into her pocket, however, to put on when she got well out of sight, and made the bent brim of her little sunburnt hat as straight as she could. Then she placed the precious two dollars in her bosom, the ten cents in her pocket, and hurried out of the gate with a rapidly beating heart. She had not made up her mind what she should do when she got to the city; and she had really not made up her mind to go to the city yet. She was only going somewhere, and her mind was full of Yellowfoot.

It was not far to Deacon Smith's house, and as Syl crept softly up the lawn which led to it, she heard a familiar voice making a most desolate sound, and there, shut up in a great coop made of laths, was poor Yellowfoot, with five other companions in misfortune.

"Biddy! biddy! biddy!" said Syl, scarcely above a whisper. But Yellowfoot heard the first call, and flapped her wings eagerly against her prison bars.

Syl cast a furtive glance towards the house to be sure that no one was looking—though she would have taken her beloved pet from under the deacon's very nose, notwithstanding she was always dreadfully afraid of him, he looked so stern and forbidding—then softly opening the door of the coop, she took the willing hen in her arms, closed it again, and walked away as fast as she could.

"I am not a thief," she said to herself. "I am only taking what is my own."

"Chuck! chuck! chuck!" said Yellowfoot, in her most energetic and delighted tone, which meant, as Syl interpreted it, "That is true."

"Now, Biddy," said Syl, "what shall we do? We haven't any home to go to, because I've run away, and if I go back they won't let me keep you, you know. We've got to find some place where they'll let us live together. I liked puss and Ponto and Frisky, but they can do without me, because everybody else likes them too. Will takes care of Frisky, and everybody feeds Ponto; puss catches mice all the time, and steals Debby's cream almost every day, when she doesn't know it! They'll miss me, I know; but I really believe, Biddy, that you like me best. I don't like Debby, and I don't like

Will very well, but I *do* like mother"—at the word mother Syl couldn't help giving a little sob;—"but she doesn't care anything about me, and says I am bad; and she sold you to Deacon Smith, when she knew that you were mine, and how much we liked each other."

Yellowfoot hung her head, and looked sad and meditative, but was silent.

"Shall we go to the city? I've got money enough to go in the train."

Yellowfoot didn't seem to approve.

"No," said Syl, to herself this time instead of Biddy, "that wouldn't do. Everybody would laugh to see a little girl in the train carrying a hen in her arms; if I only had a basket!"

But then she concluded that it would not be very easy to find an abode for her pet in the city—hens did not reside in the city as a general thing—and concluded to go away into some other town near by, where nobody knew her or her mother, and find some nice people who hadn't any little girl and wanted one, and who had a nice dooryard full of grasshoppers and dirt to scratch in, for Yellowfoot. But she must hurry, for it was late noon now, and what should she do if she did not find a shelter before dark came on.

She imparted this last plan to Yellowfoot, who said a good deal on the subject, and was evidently highly in favor of this mode of proceeding.

"We can go to Ryefield poorhouse, if we can't find anywhere else to go," said Syl. "That is a place for people who haven't any place to stay, and it isn't bad—at least the one in our town isn't. I've been there, and there are funny people there, and they tell stories, when it's winter, round the fire. I couldn't go there, though, because they know me," spoke Syl, meditatively.

The weather was very warm, and though Biddy was light, Syl didn't find it very pleasant carrying her hugged up in her arms; nor did Biddy like it. She protested against it loudly at times, and when Syl got into the village she succeeded in buying an old basket of a boy, with her ten cents. It was a forlorn-looking, battered-up thing, but it was large enough to hold her pet, and there was a cover to it that she could fasten down to keep her in it, so it answered every purpose. Syl thought at first that she would take the stage and go to Ryefield or to Gatesville; then she thought that the stage-

driver might know her, and tell her mother where she had gone. So she made up her mind to walk, though the road was through the woods nearly all the way, and she was half afraid. But she trudged on with determined little feet, until it began to grow toward nightfall, and the little sunshine that struggled through the leaves looked pale and forlorn. The houses on her way grew further and further apart, and she felt as if she were certainly as many as a hundred miles away from home.

"If this is Ryefield," she said, to herself, "I don't think it is a very pretty place, and there don't seem to be any people here who haven't any little girls of their own, and would be likely to want me; but I s'pose I haven't come to Ryefield village, or else I took the wrong way, and am walking to Halifax."

But her strength was beginning to fail; and by the time the cows began to think of going home, and the Ryefield chickens and turkeys were gobbling up the last mouthful of their supper of grasshoppers, she came to the conclusion that she could not go many steps further, and though she assured Yellowfoot that she did not wish herself at home, her voice was somewhat shaky, and Yellowfoot said something that sounded like "I don't believe a word of it!" It was discouraging enough to see such crowds of children about the doors of every cottage and farmhouse that she passed, and everywhere a girl about her size. Syl was sure that there was no chance of her finding a new mother and father here, and made up her mind to go to the poorhouse at once, if the poorhouse were near. If it were not, she didn't know what she should do. Any poor body, who hadn't anywhere else to go, had a right to stay at the poorhouse, she thought; and she didn't like to go and beg a night's lodging at a private house. If there were any people in town who hadn't a little girl, and wanted one, she would like to find them out. Mrs. Small, who lived down at the corner near her mother's house, had lost her own little girl, and wanted one, and she hadn't any doubt but there were others somewhere, if one only knew where to look for them. Of course she couldn't go to Mrs. Small, because she came to see her mother almost every day, and her mother would find out where she was at once, and take her home again, and give Yellowfoot back to Deacon Smith.

"I'll go in here and ask them if they know anyone who wants a little girl," said she, to herself, stopping before a cheery-looking white farmhouse.

A great tall funny-looking boy opened the door in answer to her timid rap.

Syl blushed and stammered, but made out to give utterance to her question at last; and Yellowfoot, who was tired of being carried about in a basket, said something, too, in a very energetic tone, whereupon the disagreeable boy began to giggle, as if he were intensely amused at something. Syl drew herself up with an air of great dignity, and without waiting to hear his reply, hurried away as fast as ever she could. There were tears in her eyes, but she wiped them away very quickly, and was determined to be brave, whatever might happen to her. On she went, with her weary, lagging little feet, until she came to an old tumble-down looking red farmhouse, that was for all the world just like the poorhouse at home in Greenfield. Syl thought that it must be the Ryefield poorhouse, and whether it was or not, if they would not give her a shelter there for the night, she must sleep out of doors with the owls and bats, for she could not go a single step further.

"Is this the poorhouse?" she asked, of a buxom damsel who appeared in the doorway, before she reached it, staring at her with curious, but not unkindly eyes.

"Lord bless you, no, dear! What made you think so?" said she.

"I don't know," said Syl, who, in her present desperate state of mind, was inclined to be more truthful than polite. "I thought it look like a poorhouse, 'cos it's such an old poor-looking house. The poorhouse in Greenfield is the poorest house in the place almost, and this is exactly like that."

"You're pretty plain-spoken, ain't you?" said the girl, laughing. "Have you got any folks at the poorhouse that you're lookin' for?"

"No," said Syl; "but if it was the poorhouse, I was going to ask them to let me stay here all night. I haven't anywhere to go, and I'm so tired." And her lips trembled in spite of herself.

"Gracious goodness!" exclaimed the girl; "ain't got anywhere to go? Ain't you got no folks?"

"Not about here," said Syl, faintly.

"Like as not you ain't had no supper."

Syl shook her head dismally, and a dreadful

pang of homesickness came over her as she thought of her mother's cheery kitchen, with the teakettle singing over the red coals, and Debby bustling about to get supper ready. Yellowfoot, too, seemed to be impressed anew with the undesirableness of her situation, and began to complain lustily.

"Just look here, marm," said the girl, seizing Syl by the arm, and dragging her into the presence of a family group, who were just sitting down to the tea-table, with a most embarrassing want of ceremony. "There's the funniest little girl you ever see, a-carrying a hen round in a basket, and says she ain't got no folks, nor anywhere to stay!"

At any other time Syl's dignity would have received a tremendous shock at this, but now, in her desperate situation, she bore being called "the funniest little girl" very meekly, and eyed the hot cakes on the table, with wistful approval.

"Dear me! I s'pose she's hungry," said the kindly-faced woman at the head of the table. "Susy, you take her hat off, and set up a chair for her. What's your name, dear?" addressing Syl.

"Sylvia," said she, feeling uncomfortably conscious of many curious eyes.

"Syliva what?" pursued her questioner.

"Syliva Curtis."

"Lor' now, I shouldn't wonder if 'twas the Widder Curtis's little gal. I saw her t'other day, when I went over to Greenfield to see her ma about her wood-lot; and she looked just like this one," said a man in a blue frock, who seemed to be the father of the family.

Syl recognized him at once as the man that Debby laughed at, because he wore such a funny old hat when he came to see her mother. Debby said that Ryefield people weren't much, anyway. That was on a happy day, such a contrast to this one that the memory of it brought a great rush of tears into Syl's eyes; and Yellowfoot, whose basket had been carefully deposited at her mistress's feet, seemed quite overcome, too, and spoke pathetically.

The good people were all sympathy, and Syl was moved to tell them the whole melancholy history of the day, at last, and they all thought it was too bad that Yellowfoot should have been sold.

"But who would have thought she'd have taken it to heart so?" said the kind woman. "Father, you must harness right up and take her home as soon as she eats her supper. Her mother'll be nigh crazy about her, as I should be if 'twas one of my little ones. Don't you fear but she'll buy your biddy back, dear," addressing Syl; "though I can't say that 'twasn't naughty of you to run away so."

Syl was fully conscious of that, and was beginning to think that home would be endurable, even without Yellowfoot.

"Mama will be worried about me," said she, with trembling lips; "only I don't think she cares much about me, anyway," she added.

But mamma *did* care about her. She was indeed well nigh frantic when dark came and Syl was missing; and as time wore on into late evening, the whole household, as well as half the neighbors, were out in search of her. When Syl appeared in the dooryard, about ten o'clock, perched upon the high seat of a farm-wagon, with a strange man beside her, she was greeted with tears of joy. Even Debby, who was promenading the piazza with a lantern, gave her a delighted hug that almost took her breath away.

Syl sobbed in her mother's arms, and had been asked no questions as yet; but Yellowfoot, who had been dozing, suddenly awoke, and breaking loose from her prison-house, hopped out upon the floor, with hoarse exclamations of delight. This explained everything, and her mother said, with her face and voice full of surprise:—

"Why, Syl! you loved your biddy more than you did your mother. I never had the least idea how much you thought of her, or I wouldn't have sold her for the world, my dear."

Syl was allowed to keep her pet, and not even Will was allowed to tease her about running away. Deacon Smith was sustained in his loss by the present of a tiny chicken which promised to be just like her in manners and conversational powers, as well as in color and shape. Syl is as great friend as ever with her, but she wouldn't be induced to run away from home again for a half-dozen Yellowfeet.

THE HOUSEKEEPER.

MOLASSES CAKE.—One cup of molasses, one cup brown sugar, one cup of cold water. Boil together; then add a cup of butter, and set aside to cool; flour as thick as a pound cake, add four well-beaten eggs, one pound each of raisins and currants, one-half pound of citron. Bake two hours.

COLBERT SOUP.—To two quarts of beef broth add two small turnips, half a carrot, and one small onion, all cut fine, and one cupful of green peas; boil them quarter of an hour; allow a poached egg to each person to be served, and add to the soup.

BROILED SHAD.—Clean, and split down the back, sprinkle salt all over it, and let it stand over night; broil over a clear fire, and cook the flesh side first and until delicately browned, and the skin side until crisp; place on a warmed platter, and spread with soft butter, salt, and two tablespoonfuls of Worcestershire sauce, and a very little lemon juice.

FRIED CHICKEN.—Singe and cut at the joints, remove the breast bone, wipe each piece with a clean, wet cloth; dredge with salt and pepper, and dip in egg and cracker crumbs; fry in deep, hot fat, and serve with tomato sauce.

STEWED CUCUMBERS.—Pare large cucumbers, cut them lengthwise into four parts, and remove the large seeds; soak half an hour in cold water, cook in salted water until tender, drain off the water, and make a thin, white sauce and pour over them.

MINCED BEEF.—Three pounds of raw beef chopped fine, five crackers rolled fine, two well beaten eggs, one and one-half teaspoonfuls of pepper, three slices of salt pork chopped, one-half a cupful of milk, salt to taste, and a little sage; mix all thoroughly, and make into a loaf; bake two hours; serve cold, cut in slices.

STEWED POTATOES.—Cut cold boiled potatoes into small pieces; put them in a spider with one pint of milk, add salt and pepper, and dredge flour over them; then allow them to boil until the milk looks thick. Put them into a warm vegetable dish, and add a good-sized piece of butter; serve hot.

TO PREPARE BEETS.—Wash, but do not cut them, as that destroys the sweetness and color; cook in boiling water until tender. Young beets cook in one hour or less; old beets require a longer time. Never attempt to cook wilted or

stringy beets; they will never boil tender. Young beets are delicious cut in small pieces and served in drawn butter. They are often pickled in vinegar, spiced or plain, and served cold, or may be cut into dice and mixed with other vegetables for a salad.

BERRY PUDDING.—Three pints of blueberries, five cups of flour, one pint of N. O. molasses, one teaspoonful of soda, one-half teaspoonful of salt, one-half teaspoonful of cinnamon. Boil in a buttered mould or pail three hours. Half this quantity can be used, and is sufficient for a small family.

SAUCE FOR PUDDING.—Whites of two eggs, one cupful of powdered sugar, one cupful of boiling milk, juice of one lemon; beat the whites of the eggs foamy, but not stiff; add sugar gradually, and then add lemon juice, and add to the boiling milk slowly.

VERONA CREAM.—Soak one-half a box of Cox's gelatine in one cupful of sherry wine, add the juice of one lemon and one cupful of sugar; heat until the sugar and gelatine are dissolved; strain it into one pint of cream, mix well and turn into moulds or cups; set in cold water; serve cold with cream.

HUCKLEBERRY JELLY.—In selecting the berries take those with the bloom upon them, put them into an earthen jar and cover it closely. Set the jar in a pan of cold water, and boil very gently until the juice is expressed from the fruit; then strain the juice through a jelly-bag, measure it, pour it into a porcelain-lined preserving pan and let it boil for two minutes; then add the sugar, in the proportion of one and one-half pounds to each pint of juice. After it has boiled for ten minutes put a spoonful upon a plate to try it; if it becomes firm it is done enough; if not, boil a little longer, and put up into small jars, covering them the same as other jellies.

SPICED GRAPES.—Seven pounds of grapes, three pounds of sugar, brown or white, one pint of good vinegar, two teaspoonfuls of ground cinnamon, one teaspoonful of ground allspice, one-half teaspoonful of ground cloves. Stem the grapes, weigh them, pulp them, at the same time taking out the seeds. Put the juice of grapes, sugar and vinegar into a preserving kettle. Let boil, and skim; add spices, then grapes, skins and pulp. Let all get boiling hot, then remove from stove and can.

PICKLED PEACHES.—Four pounds of sugar, one pint of vinegar to twelve pounds of fruit. Put sugar and vinegar together and boil, then add the fruit and let it come to a boiling point. The next day drain off the liquor and boil again. Do this three times, and your pickles are delicious. Add cinnamon to the liquor, and stick two or three cloves in each peach. Do not pare, but rub the fruit carefully with a flannel cloth, and put up in cans, the same as any fruit, though they will keep a long time in jars.

TO PRESERVE CRABAPPLES.—Sort your apples, and the perfect ones put by themselves; trim the stems (having about an inch on the apple) and scrape out the blossom end; wash them, put in a porcelain or other preserve kettle, cover with water; cook until you can run a straw through them, skim out and weigh. To each pound take a pound of sugar and a cup of water; boil and skim, put in the apples, and boil until clear; skim out, boil the syrup a few minutes, then pour over the apples. The water that the apples were boiled in measure, and to each pint put a pound of white sugar; boil an hour, and it makes a beautiful jelly.

TO BAKE A HAM.—Unless when too salt, from not being sufficiently soaked, a ham (particularly a young and fresh one) eats much better baked than boiled, and remains longer good. The safer plan is to lay it into plenty of cold water over night. The following day soak it for an hour or more in warm water, wash it delicately clean, trim smoothly off all rusty parts, and lay it with the rind downwards into a coarse paste rolled to about an inch thick; moisten the edges, draw, pinch them together, and fold them over on the upper side of the ham, taking care to close them so that no gravy can escape. Send it to a well-heated, but not a fierce oven. A very small ham will require three hours' baking, and a large one five. The crust and the skin must be removed while it is hot. When part only of a ham is dressed, this mode is better far than boiling it.

A REMEDY FOR THE COMMON WART.—It is very pleasing to know that a cure for the common wart, so unsightly and often so abundant on the hands and face, has been announced by physicians. According to *The Medical Press*, small doses of sulphate of magnesia taken internally, will remove them. M. Colrat, of Lyons, has drawn attention to this extraordinary fact: Several children treated with three grains of Epsom salts, morning and evening, were promptly cured. M. Auburs cites the case of a woman whose face was disfigured by these excrescences, and who was cured in a month by a dram and a half of magnesia taken daily. Another man reports a case of large warts which disappeared in

a fortnight from the daily administration of ten grains of salts.

QUINCE MARMALADE.—When to economize the fruit is not an object, pare, core and quarter some of the inferior quinces, and boil them in as much water as will nearly cover them, until they begin to break; strain the juice from them, and for the marmalade put half a pint of it to each pound of fresh quinces; in preparing these, be careful to cut out the hard stony parts round the cores. Simmer them gently until they are perfectly tender, then press them, with the juice, through a coarse sieve; put them into a perfectly clean pan, and boil them until they form almost a dry paste; add for each pound of quinces, and the half-pint of juice, three-quarters of a pound of sugar, in fine powder, and boil the marmalade for half an hour, stirring it gently without ceasing; it will be very firm and bright in color. If made shortly after the fruit is gathered, a little additional sugar will be required; and when a richer and less dry marmalade is better liked, it must be boiled a shorter time, and an equal weight of fruit sugar must be used.

ALCOHOL IN DIPHTHERIA.—The following, from the *Journal of Dietetics*, is well worth knowing:—

Alcohol, we make bold to say, is the prince of antiseptics, and the most perfect and reliable medicine, of which we have any knowledge, in diphtheria. Diluted with equal parts of water, and given in small and repeated doses, the malignant symptoms of this most fatal malady disappear, and convalescence becomes assured. It is interesting to note with what facility the alcohol dissolves the diphtheretic exudation in the throat, lowers the temperature, and calms the pulse, showing its destructive action upon the germs of the disease, which have been absorbed by the glands, and gained access to the blood. This remedy has been used by us in the treatment of diphtheria since 1873, during which time no case of the disease has slipped through our hands except in one solitary instance, and that case was in *articulo mortis* before the remedy was given. The remedy is also prophylactic to the disease, as we have found in many instances, where it has not been expedient to quarantine the patient.

LETTERS FROM THE GOVERNORS.—To further illustrate the fact that POND'S EXTRACT is used and recommended by more distinguished people than any remedy extant for all kinds of Pain and Inflammation, letters were sent to the present Governors of the different States in the Union, asking their opinions of POND'S EXTRACT. They knew of the excellence of POND'S EXTRACT, and nearly all used it and recommended it. With their permission, we will publish, from time to time, some of these letters.

CURIOUS AND OTHER MATTERS.

FACTS ABOUT RIVERS.—The explorations of recent years have considerably changed our notions of the comparative rank of the great rivers of the world. If we class rivers according to their length, both the Nile and the Yangtse-Kiang must be named before the Amazon. The Nile's 4,000 miles of waterway, from its headwaters south of Lake Victoria to the Mediterranean, make it the largest river in the world—nearly as long as the Mississippi and Missouri together, and about 1,000 miles longer than the Amazon. The Amazon is the greatest river in the world, because it has immense tributaries, some of them larger than the Danube or the Rhine, by means of which the Amazon basin covers an area about 1,000,000 square miles greater than that of any other river. The Congo River is the fourth longest river in the world, but in the volume of water that it pours into the ocean it is second only to the Amazon.

A very curious thing has been discovered about the three greatest river basins in South America—the Orinoco, the Amazon and the Plate basins. It has been found that they are so connected by water-courses that the traveler can pass in steamboats or canoes from one river system into another. He can ascend the Orinoco River for hundreds of miles until he comes to the Cassaquari, on which he can travel for about two hundred miles to the Rio Negro, one of the largest tributaries of the Amazon. Floating down to the Amazon, and then descending that river for some distance, he can ascend the great Madeira tributary. In its upper course he can turn into the Mamore, then into the Guaporé, then into the little Alegre River. Here, as is often done, he can haul his canoe over a low, grassy flat about two miles wide, and launch it into the Rio Agoapehy, and then descend by the Jauru and Paraguay to Buenos Ayres and the Plate River. The Alegre and Agoapehy Rivers, head streams of two mighty systems, flow side by side for twenty or thirty miles, and many of their branches are separated by a few hundred yards.

Mr. Wells, the engineer whom Brazil has employed for years in its railroad surveys, says that in many places the basin of the Amazon could easily be connected with that of the Plate River by canals, and communication by water would thus be rendered complete from one system to the other.

THE BELL THAT "TOLLS THE KNELL OF PARTING DAY."—The curfew is said to have been introduced into England by William the Conqueror. By that monarch it was ordained,

under severe penalties, when the curfew bell rang at 8 o'clock in the evening all lights and fires should be extinguished. There are those who hold that this was merely the enforcing of an existing and very common police regulation to that effect. The absolute prohibition of lights after the ringing of the curfew bell was abolished by Henry I. in the year 1100, but the practice of tolling a bell at a fixed hour in the evening was continued, and this, which is still extant in some places, is a survival of the curfew of mediæval times. At first the common hour was 7 o'clock, then it was gradually advanced to 8, and in some places to 9 o'clock; indeed, in Scotland, 10 o'clock was not an unusual hour. The curfew was a regulation most useful in those early days, when it was the custom to place the fire in a hole in the middle of the floor, under an opening in the roof to allow the escape of smoke. When the family retired for the night the fire was extinguished by covering it up; hence the term *convrefeu*, or curfew. The regulation was also serviceable in obliging the women to keep in their houses, and thus preventing night brawls in the street. It is believed there is no historical authority for the popular tradition that the severity exhibited by the Conqueror, in enforcing obedience to the curfew, was most particularly designed to prevent the English from assembling in secret to plan schemes of rebellion against their Norman lords.

HOW MANY WORDS DO YOU KNOW.—There is no man living who knows every one of the 75,000 words in Webster's dictionary, nor half, nor a third of them. Nor is there a man that could define them if he were asked. Shakespeare, who had the richest vocabulary used by any Englishman, employed only 16,000 words; Milton could pick out from 8,000; but the average man, a graduate from one of the great universities, rarely has a vocabulary of more than 3,000 or 4,000 words. In our country there are Americans born and bred who contrive to express all their wants and opinions in 300 words, and in many places the knowledge of 150 or 200 words is sufficient to carry a man through the world. So the unabridged dictionary is cluttered up with 60,000 or more technical or obsolete words that you never hear in ordinary conversation, or see in ordinary books and newspapers.

CROCODILES.—The crocodiles inhabiting the lower parts of the Burmese rivers are of a very large size, some of them attaining to nineteen feet in length, writes a *San Francisco Chronicle*

correspondent from Mandalay. A writer, who states he has visited India, says he cannot discover the difference between the eastern crocodile and the Louisiana and Florida alligator or cayman; that there is none, in fact, except in name. It is evident he has not seen any at close quarters, for there is much difference between the several varieties. There are actually twelve species of the crocodile, eight true, one gavia and three alligators; these have a specific, not a general difference. Those I saw in the Ganges have long, narrow muzzles and are called gavials. They are peculiar to that river, being found nowhere else. I have met with the saurian tribe in Egypt, West Africa, India, Burmah, South America, Jamaica, and the southern states, and have found that all differ in some particular. The Burmese name for them is "Meejoun." There is a town on the west bank of the Irrawaddy called Hinthadah, where I resided for some months. During the year previous, I was informed by the head man of the place, over 100 persons were killed by these ferocious reptiles. There is a ford over the river at this place, and the crocodiles had an inconvenient habit of lying in wait for those persons crossing the ford, seizing and carrying them off. Not being fond of their food in a fresh condition, they hide their victims in the mud at the bottom of the river until the flesh has gained by keeping a sufficiently gamey flavor to be relished by them. Dogs are a favorite food of theirs, and a crocodile will often land and run after a canine to try and capture him for his larder. As the reptile can only run fast in a straight line, being too unwieldy to turn quickly, the dog generally contrives to elude his pursuer and makes his escape. I killed several crocodiles during my stay in Hinthadah, and had their hides prepared and tanned, and utilized them for boots and shoes. Being impervious to wet, I found them most serviceable during the wet monsoons. I used to get a Burman to paddle me about in a dugout until I caught sight of a "meejoun" lying on a sandbank, basking in the sun, when I took careful aim at their vulnerable part, their belly, where the scales are thin and a conical bullet will enter with ease. A couple of these leaden pills fired into this portion of a meejoun's anatomy will make him feel very sick indeed, and he will soon give up the ghost. On approaching a dead crocodile the heavy and penetrating odor of musk is most nauseating, and it was a long time before I became accustomed to it.

ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE.—Orpheus was the son of Apollo and the muse Calliope. The skill with which Orpheus struck the lyre was fabled

to have been such as to move the very trees and rocks, and the beasts of the forests assembled round him as he touched its chords. He had for his wife a nymph named Eurydice, who died from the bite of a serpent, as she was flying from Aristæus, also the son of Apollo. Orpheus, disconsolate at her loss, determined to descend to the lower world, to endeavor to mollify its rulers, and obtain permission for his beloved Eurydice to return to the regions of light. Armed only with his lyre, he entered the realms of Hades, and gained an easy admittance to the palace of Pluto. At the music of his "golden shell," to borrow the beautiful language of ancient poetry, the wheel of Ixion stopped, Tantalus forgot the thirst that tormented him, the vulture ceased to prey on the vitals of Tityos, and Pluto and Proserpina lent a favoring ear to his prayer. Eurydice was allowed to return with him to the upper world, but only on condition that Orpheus did not look back upon her before they had reached the confines of the kingdom of darkness. He broke the condition, and she was carried back to the infernal regions by Charon, the ferryman who bears the souls of the dead across the river Styx.

HEAT ON JEWELS.—A writer in the *Jewelers' Weekly* explains as follows the effect which heat has on various jewels: "Many people believe that a diamond can be heated white hot with impunity—and a good fire; but I wouldn't advise them to try the experiment too often. I have seen diamonds which had passed through the great fire at Chicago. They were covered with a white film, and looked like pieces of alum. After passing through the polisher's hands they were apparently as good as new, but I still fancied that there was a certain loss of lustre, and feel sure that a second heating would have made this still more plainly perceptible.

How high a heat will rubies and sapphires stand? Well, I've carefully heated some dark-colored sapphires, and been rewarded by seeing them cool off several shades lighter. Upon the color of others heat made not the least impression. I was obliged to be very careful in heating and in letting the stones cool, as any sudden variation in temperature will split them in a moment. Topaz I have destroyed entirely by heat, and rubies are also easily ruined by a high temperature. Heated while hot and plunged into water, any of the latter stones will split into a thousand fragments; so be careful, if you make any experiments. Pearls should not be heated, either, as the result will resemble oyster shells more than anything else."

RUTHVEN'S PUZZLE PAGE.

Send all communications for this Department to
EDWIN R. BRIGGS, West Bethel, Oxford
County, Maine.

Answers to July Puzzles.

- | | | |
|----------------|--------------|---------------|
| 2.—T-arras. | 3.—U-sage. | 4.—V-aunt. |
| 5.—W-assail. | 6.—W-ilk. | 7.—Y-arrow. |
| 8.—M | 9.—H A P | |
| RED | RULES | |
| RENEW | HUMERAL | |
| MENACER | ALEWIFE | |
| DECIDE | PERIGEE | |
| WEDGE | SAFER | |
| REEF | LEE | |
| 10.—Gold-ring. | | |
| 11.—ARIAN | 12.—PETIT | |
| RIDGE | ELATE | |
| IDOLS | TAMER | |
| AGLET | ITEMS | |
| NESTS | TERSE | |
| 13.—Craft-y. | 14.—Bos-a. | 15.—Matte-r. |
| 16.—Persis-t. | 17.—Verge-r. | 18.—Genera-l. |
| 19.—Materia-l. | 20.—Quas-h. | 21.—Paris-h. |
| | 22.—Dram-a. | |

46.—A Charade.

If we TOTAL all the trials
That to us seem hard to bear,
There will *second* to our spirits,
Broken down with grief and care,
Peace, sweet peace, *first* and around us,
Marking out a future rare. ADELAIDE.

Diamonds.

- 47.—1 In California. 2 An aeriform fluid. 3
A small-sized animal. 4 A religious enthusiast.
5 An issue. 6 A metal. 7 In Mexico.
48.—1 In Greece. 2 To loiter. 3 A flowering
shrub. 4 A genus of palms. 5 A musical scale.
6 A gash. 7 In Spain. VERBENA.

Word Syncopeations.

- 49.—Take a particular breed from ornamental
stone work, and leave to examine.
50.—Take to torture from the rind of roasted
pork, and leave to hold fast.
51.—Take injury from very large, and leave a
vegetable fossil.
52.—Take the whole from a round chemical
vessel, and leave a gift.
53.—Take trifling from ruined, and leave the
channel of a river. DINAH.

Squares.

- 54.—1 A Spanish coin. 2 A white fish in the
Mexican Lakes. 3 A delicate piece. 4 A Ger-

man diplomatist, 1748-1816. 5 An inventor. 6
The horns of a deer.

55.—1 An ancient vessel. 2 The girdle of a
Jewish priest. 3 A piece of armor worn on the
thighs. 4 To inspire (obs.). 5 Birds. 6 Testi-
mony. HOWARD.

Deletions.

- 56.—Take a letter from to hinder, and leave a
decision of a court.
57.—Take a letter from a Greek or Muscovite
nobleman, and leave an animal.
58.—Take a letter from a stipulation, and
leave a suit at law.
59.—Take a letter from unlawful imprison-
ment, and leave to adorn.
60.—Take a letter from dark, and leave a
virtue, attribute, or perfection existing through-
out eternity.
61.—Take a letter from to agree, and leave to
wither. CYRIL DEANE.

62.—Enigma.

Bad boys are often 8 2 6,
When punished for mischievous tricks;
If 9 7 10 you ever hear,
You may be sure a bird is near;
Good sportsmen say the 12 3 1,
When stalked, will quickly scent the gun;
A 11 5 4, composed of fruit,
Seems every urchin's taste to suit;
The WHOLE is used by artists clever,
To show them new designs whenever
To make good patterns they endeavor. MAUDE.

Answers in two Months.

Prizes.

For the largest list of answers to this month's
puzzles, received before September 10th, we offer
an illustrated novelette; and for the next best
list, a book of beautiful poems.

Solvers.

Answers to the May puzzles were received
from Harry Gunn, Cora A. L., Vinnie, Captain
Poser, Teddy, Birdie Browne, Nicholas, Birdie
Lane, Katie Smith, Ida May, J. D. L., Black
Hawk, Geraldine, Kitty Connor, Jack, Ann
Eliza, Good Hugh, I. O. T. and Bridget McQ.

Prize-Winners.

J. D. L., Philadelphia, Pa., for the largest list
of correct answers. Captain Poser, Fort Wayne,
Ind., for the next best list.

EDITOR'S DRAWER.

THINGS PLEASANT AND OTHERWISE.

HOW THE ICE WAS BROKEN.

She was a maiden young and fair,
With dreamy, soulful eyes,
As lovely as the houris
Of Mahomet's Paradise.

I met her at a hop one evening
In a beach hotel,
And over head and ears in love
With her at once I fell.

We soon became acquainted,
And the maid was very shy,
And scarce would deign to look at me
When any one was by.

Even when along the beach,
Alone to take a stroll we went,
Nor word nor look of hers
Gave me the least encouragement.

I dared not tell her of my love,
Until there should appear
Some sign that to my wooing
She would lend a willing ear.

We stood beside the ocean's marge
One lovely August day,
And watched the fleet of gallant yachts
Which seaward bore away.

It was a pleasant sight to see
Them skimming o'er the seas,
Like snow-birds, their white wings spread
To catch the gentle breeze.

All kinds of yachts were there,
The schooner, sloop and catboat, too;
So turning to the maiden fair,
As o'er the foam they flew,

With flags displayed from gaff and truck,
I said, "May I inquire,
Among the various styles of yachts,
Which one you most admire?"

Her fair cheeks flushed as glow the skies
When Sol sinks in the west;
"I think," she softly said, "I like
A little smack the best."

No one was near; the blushing maid
I to my bosom drew,
And kissed her lips, and said,
"Now there's a little smack for you!"

I thought to be reproved, but she
Of anger gave no token;
And that is how the ice that day
Between us two was broken.

—Selected.

SPELLING BY TELEPHONE.

The telephone recently gave a man a lesson in spelling, but he was so dull that a boy had to be called in to aid him. It seems that Mr. Jones,

senior partner of Jones & Son, had a telephone put in his grocery. It took him several days to become familiar with the instrument; but he found it paid to have customers order goods by telephone from a distance, when before he had one they would run to the nearest shop.

Mr. Jones was congratulating himself upon this one morning when the telephone bell rung.

After the usual number of hellos, he distinctly caught an order for ten pounds of sugar ten pounds of coffee, a pound of crackers, half a bushel of potatoes, and a peck of apples to be delivered; but he didn't quite catch the name.

After several vain trials, he asked the person sending the message to spell it, while with his pencil he prepared to write it down on a sheet of wrapping-paper.

"Double u," said the voice.

Jones wrote it down, and said, "Yes."

"Double u."

"I've got that."

"Well, put it down again."

"Yes; go ahead."

"Double u."

"Why, I've got that."

"Put it down again."

"But I have it down twice."

"Well, put it down three times."

Jones sighed and wrote it again.

"A double d."

"A double d—that's add," soliloquized Jones; then he shouted back, "Add what?"

"Add nothing. Just put down a double d."

"This is nonsense!" muttered Jones; but he cheerfully called back, "Yes; go ahead."

"E double l."

"Wha-a-a-t?"

"E double l."

Mr. Jones stamped on the floor and pulled his whiskers savagely; but he put it down and sweetly answered, "Yes."

"That's all."

"All what?"

"All the name."

Then Mr. Jones studied his paper carefully a moment, when he had written thus: "U u u u u a d d e l l," and remarked to himself, "Why, that's confounded nonsense!"

He then hallooed through the telephone in vain, and rung up the central office and inquired in vain who had been talking with him. Then he studied his writing again.

Pretty soon in came his son, the junior partner. Mr. Jones showed him the letters and told him how he got them.

The junior partner studied them, read them

both ways, looked on the back of the paper, and finally said it was the greatest bosh he ever saw.

They showed the paper to the bookkeeper, and he said it was sheer foolishness. The big clerk said it was absurd; the little clerk thought somebody was crazy.

Finally the errand-boy looked at it and was told that it was meant for some customer's name; thereupon he asked Mr. Jones to call off the letters as near as he could remember the same as he had received them by the telephone.

Mr. Jones did so, when the errand-boy nearly choked with laughing, and said:—

"Why, that's perfectly plain; it's W. W. Waddell."

Mr. Jones has not felt such an immense relief since he went into business.

BABY'S SOLILOQUY.—I am here. And if this is what they call the world, I don't think much of it. It is a very flannelly world, and smells of paregoric awfully. It's a dreadful light world too, and makes me blink, I tell you. And I don't know what to do with my hands; I think I'll dig my fist in my eyes. No, I won't. I'll scramble at the corner of my blanket and chaw it up, and then I'll holler. Whatever happens I'll holler, and the more paregoric they give me the louder I'll yell. That old nurse puts the spoon in the corner of my mouth in a very uneasy way, and keeps tasting my milk herself all the while. She spilled snuff right in it last night; when I hollered she trotted me. Never mind, when I'm a man I'll pay her back good. There's a pin sticking in me now, and if I say a word about it I'll be trotted or fed, and I would rather have catnip tea. I'll tell you who I am; I found out to-day. I heard folks say, "Hush, don't wake up Emmeline's baby"; and I suppose that pretty, white-faced woman on the other pillow is Emmeline. No, I was mistaken, for a big chap was in here just now and wanted to see Bob's baby, and looked at me and said I was "a funny little toad, and looked just like Bob." He smelt of cigars, and I am not used to them. I wonder who else I belong to. Yes, there's another one that's "ganma." Emmeline told me, and she took me up and held me against her soft cheek, and said "it was ganma's baby, so it was." I declare, I do not know who I do belong to; but I'll holler, and maybe I'll find out. There comes Snuffy with catnip tea. The idea of giving babies catnip tea when they are crying for information! I'm going to sleep. I wonder if I don't look pretty red in the face. I wonder why my hands won't go where I want them to.

It is stated that the business of the London Postoffice is of such magnitude that the present Postmaster-General has saved \$15,000 a year in sealing-wax and twine expenses alone. That's nothing.

A few years ago a drummer for a Chicago dry-goods house was boasting in the presence of one of his characteristically modest professional brothers from Boston of the immense business which "his firm" transacted. The Bostonian listened with respectful attention to the tremendous figures which the other man produced for his benefit, showing the colossal receipts and expenses of the Chicago house. When he got through the Western drummer complacently remarked: "Ah, how much of a business do you people do?" "I'm sure I don't know," quietly replied the drummer from down East. "But I can state one fact which may give you some light on that point. The first of last January the head of the firm directed the bookkeepers and shipping-clerks to refrain from dotting i's or crossing t's until further notice. The result was a saving for the year of over a million of dollars in our ink bills. I believe the precise amount was \$1,000,049.05."—*New York Tribune*.

Coming into court one day, Erskine perceived the ankle of Mr. Balfour, who generally expressed himself in a very circumlocutory manner, tied up with a silk handkerchief. "Why, what's the matter?" said Erskine. "I was taking a romantic ramble in my brother's grounds," replied Balfour, "when, coming to a gate, I had to climb over it, by which I came in contact with the first bar, and grazed the epidermis of my leg, which has caused a slight extravasation of blood." "You may thank your lucky stars," said Erskine, "that your brother's gate was not as lofty as your *style*, or you must have broken your neck."

"She was a particular friend of my wife," said a friend of the Stroller, "although an entire stranger to me. She was to visit us for the first time, and I was requested to meet her at an evening train at the Union Depot. Miss — was a rather large blonde, somewhat after the Swedish type. Her plain dress and unaffected way, as well as her fresh complexion, indicated that she was a country girl, and, indeed, I remembered hearing my wife say that her people lived on a farm. I introduced myself, and we ascended the steps and started toward the Madison-street car. 'How sad!' she exclaimed. 'But it is a large funeral. Do you often have such occurrences at this late hour in Chicago?' I dared not laugh at her for fear of giving offence, so I simply said, 'Oh, that is no funeral procession; those are hacks and cabs that are for hire, and they are obliged to stand in line and not fill the street.' Several other things equally 'green' and absurd were asked about before we reached home, and each time I innocently corrected her, and entered into explanations to familiarize our verdant guest with city ways. It was after dinner that night that I heard a sup-

pressed tittering in the back parlor between my wife and her girl friend, and presently they both rushed upon me and laughed outright. I had been victimized by the blonde beauty. She had spent months in Washington, and had been taken for a 'green one' before, and she had seized upon this opportunity to play a practical joke on me. She told me afterward that she never had such a task to contain herself as during that ride in the street car, when I was innocently explaining 'city ways' to her, when she was familiar with more cities than I ever hope to visit."—*Chicago Journal*.

"Yes," said the young man, as he threw himself at the feet of the pretty school teacher. "I love you, and would go to the world's end for you."

"You could not go to the end of the world for me, James. The world, or the earth, as it is called, is round like a ball, slightly flattened at the poles. One of the first lessons in elementary geography is devoted to the shape of the globe. You must have studied it when you were a boy."

"Of course I did, but"—

"And it is no longer a theory. Circumnavigators have established the fact."

"I know; but what I meant was that I would do anything to please you. Ah, Minerva, if you knew the aching void!"

"There is no such thing as a void, James. Nature abhors a vacuum; but admitting that there could be such a thing, how could the void you speak of be a void if there were an ache in it?"

"I meant to say that my life will be lonely without you; that you are my daily thought and my nightly dream. I would go anywhere to be with you. If you were in Australia or at the North Pole I would fly to you!"

"Fly! It will be another century before men can fly. Even when the laws of gravitation are successfully overcome, there will remain, says a late scientific authority, the difficulty of maintaining a balance!"

"Well, at all events," exclaimed the youth, "I've got a pretty fair balance in the savings-bank and I want you to be my wife. There!"

"Well, James, since you put it in that light, I"—

Let the curtain fall.—*Protector*.

A QUESTION IN MUSIC.—Billings, the celebrated musical composer, boasted that there was no point connected with the science of music that he did not understand. A Boston wag, knowing his profound vanity, sent him a note, requesting an interview with him at the Lamb

Tavern, on a particular day, to consult about a difficult question in music, which, he said, no other man in Boston could answer. Billings promptly met him, and said to him: "Whatever your question may be, I pledge myself to answer it, as there is nothing connected with the science I have not mastered." "My question is an important one," replied the wag, with the most serious face imaginable; "indeed, it affects the whole world, and has never yet been answered." "Let me hear it," said Billings, growing excited. "It is this," said the other; "when a man *snores* in his sleep through two octaves, so that the whole house can hear it, do you consider the sounds produced to be vocal or instrumental music?"

"Then you don't want a clothes-wringer to-day?" said the man.

"No, I don't," said the woman. "Times are too hard to think about it. Here it is the middle o' the summer, and me with my winter hat yet. I think I see myself buying a clothes-wringer, and goin' bareheaded till next winter. Not much."

"But I can sell you one on weekly payments," put in the man. "Give it to you at the wholesale price, and let you pay a dollar a week on it. In that way you wouldn't feel it, and before you knew it you'd have it all paid for, and be getting the use of it all the time. Ain't that fair enough?"

"I'm not finding any fault with your terms," said the woman, "but do I want to hide all that money where it can't be seen? A clothes-wringer wouldn't look well propped up in a front window, would it? Six dollars is a right smart o' money, and I could get a hat with it that would just more'n make the plasterer's wife wish she'd stayed in the old country."

"But," urged the man, persuasively, "think of the hard work it would save you; besides, it's dirt cheap at that price. No twistin' your finifiers out of joint if you have one o' them. Shall we call it a trade?"

"Not if I know myself!" returned the woman. "Why, sir, with six dollars I could almost get a cloak that would make nearly every woman on the square catch cold peeping through the door crack; and I have my mind on a piece of alpaca that could be sent home to me for about that figure, that would take the peace out of every family within seven doors each way. I don't spend much money these hard times, but when I do I want to get a little satisfaction out of it. So you can move on with your squeezin' machine, an' sell it to some woman who hain't got no pride about her;" and she slammed the door in his face.

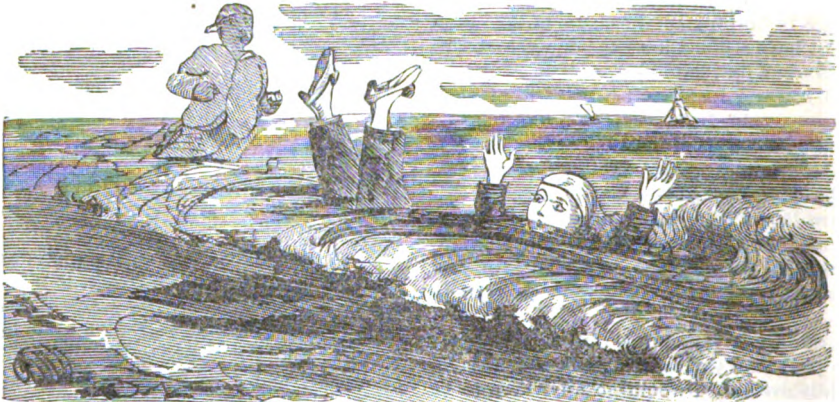
MISS JULIA AT NEWPORT.



Miss Julia, who is stopping at Newport, prepares for her first salt-water bath of the season.



Finds the water cooler than she supposed, and wonders if she had better duck or dress.



A big wave settles the question, not to her satisfaction.



Is carried to a bath-house by two fishermen, who smell of lobsters.



Writes to all her female friends how she narrowly escaped drowning, and was rescued by two handsome young gentlemen, who periled their lives to save hers.



BALLOU'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

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THE TRAGEDY OF ROMER'S CLIFF.

JAMES FRANKLIN FITTS.

CHAPTER I.

THAT truth is far stranger than fiction, that life makes for us such tragedies as never were written from any poor human imagination, I am a living witness.

You have asked me, my dear Laura, to tell you what there has been in my past life to cast such a shade of seriousness upon my face. You flatter me by saying that I am very handsome; in truth, I used to think I had beauty, but of late years very little of such thoughts have troubled me. Having become my friend within the past two years, of course you know nothing of my life before I came hither with my husband to make a new home. You see me as I am now, and you truly say that I have no present cause for anything but happiness. A husband, than whom none could be more devoted nor kind, two sweet sunny-faced children, to make glad this delightful house, the affection and admiration of many new and good friends; indeed, Laura, you say truly that I have every reason to be content with my lot. But still, you say, there is a shadow often on my face; and sometimes you think you have seen in it a look of woful terror, strangely out of place with such surroundings, the meaning of which you cannot imagine. And you think it is a shadow of something in the past which is thus projected over my life.

You are right. I live in the midst of love and pleasure, and am quite as happy as it is often given mortals to be; yet often in my

waking as well as in my sleeping hours, I seem to see a face and to hear a voice which drive the flush from my cheek with the dreadful recollections they suggest.

I will tell you why this is.

I am, since my marriage, Janet Clymer; before, I was Janet Merton, and dwelt at Monteith, a village so far from this that you can hardly have heard of it. My parents died in my infancy, and I had been adopted by my aunt, my mother's sister, for whom I was named. She had never married, and was very wealthy, while my poor mother had always lived just a step above poverty. My Aunt Janet's story was quite romantic; but it will suffice to say that at the age of eighteen she was engaged to a rich man, who, dying suddenly, only a week before the day set for the wedding, left her by his will his elegant house, his lands, and in fact, all his great property. She at once took possession of the mansion, and, true to his memory, lived there with her servants alone, until her adoption of me. If Aunt Janet had been neglectful of my mother, as I have heard it said, she seemed determined to go to the other extreme with me. From a mere child, up to the age of nineteen, I was petted and made much of; and I think it is owing to some natural good that is in me that I was not completely spoiled. I loved my aunt very dearly; but with all others I was wayward and capricious. I was accomplished beyond any of the girls of the village, and was hated by many of them for it, and for

—yes, Laura, I can say it to you—for my beauty. Nay, you need not tell me that it lasts still; I only speak now of myself as I was then, when my proud, girlish heart courted admiration, and my glass, often consulted, told me that I was beautiful. I played, I sang and painted, and excelled in all these accomplishments, and my kind old aunt told me one day with gratified pride that I entertained my company with beautiful grace and captivation; but better than all this, I loved long walks, through the wild scenery around Romer's Cliff, west of the town, or gallops over the smooth roads on Aunt Janet's spirited horses.

I have mentioned Romer's Cliff. It was a wild place, with a story known to all the village.

Of course I had my lovers; but I was too fastidious to take up with any of them, and not a few had a decided *no* from my lips. So it was that I easily gained the name of a coquette; unjustly, I think, because the lads of the village were not of that kind that could expect to please such a girl as I was.

"Don't say yes in a hurry, Janey," my aunt would often say, with a laugh. "You're having pretty good times here; it'll be better for you in the end to enjoy them yet a while."

I thought so, too; and so one after another I sent my admirers to the right about, and kept myself heart-free.

There was one of them, however, who for a long time gave me no chance to say that hard little word of two letters. It was Ralph Sanders, a young man who taught the village school; a tall, strong fellow, intelligent and educated, with a musical voice, and a kind, loving way about him that I think would have won me, had it not been for my good aunt's caution. I should not have mentioned him with the other young men of the village, for he was far superior to all of them, and was really a man that any society might have been proud of. But I watched myself carefully, and succeeded, rather against my inclinations, in keeping my heart away from him. As for him, he was faithful in his attentions to me, and all deference and gentleness when with me; but thus far he had not once spoken of love, though his large, gray eyes had often silently told me the story that his lips refused.

His passion was well-known in the village, as I learned one night when I told the coachman to drive to the post-office on the way home, and I leaned unobserved out of the

window, awaiting his return. Two men, whom I knew by voice but not by name, sauntered by on the sidewalk, and unsuspecting of my presence, talked of the man that I thought most of when I allowed myself to think at all of such subjects.

"What, the school-master?" queried one.

"Yes," answered the other.

"What's the matter with him, any way?"

"Lovesick, I reckon. When a man who loves his rifle, and can handle it as well as he can, quits it to run after a woman, you may be sure he's getting a little soft. Why, the fellow's the best shot in the country. He'll take off a squirrel's head with a rifle-ball at three hundred yards, and he used to love the sport so well that he'd get up early mornings, to shoot before school-time. He's dropped all that now."

Riding home by myself, I first became angry at Ralph for giving any occasion to make such remark; and then I gave him a little pity for the fidelity of his love, which I saw must soon be brought to grief. But my thoughts did not linger long with him; they speedily turned to Sidney Bartol, the stranger who had set the town on tiptoe of excitement for the past month, and with whom I had ridden, walked and chatted several times. He was tall, dark of hair and eyes, and distinguished-looking; and rumor said that he was both rich and eminent, traveling *incognito* for amusement, and had stopped here for a temporary rest. The days and weeks had slipped away since his arrival, and still he stayed; and if I read aright the meaning of the looks that he gave me, I was the cause of his delay. But him, too, I had put away from my thoughts; I had once or twice half whispered to myself that I could not love such a dark, mysterious being as he seemed; and then I would stifle all thought on the subject with the convenient reflection:—

"Pshaw! they're all the same to me. I'll marry none of them; I'm well content to be my Aunt Janet's girl for some long years yet."

I saw through the shutters that the front parlor was lighted; and I met at the door my maid, who told me that Mr. Sanders was waiting for me. I entered the parlor, half vexed at his presence there after what I had heard that evening. He was standing by the piano, humming the first bars of a waltz that I had been playing; and he came directly forward when he saw me.

"I beg pardon, Janet"—he *would* call me by my Christian name, and he was the only one of my admirers who dared to. "I beg pardon," he repeated, "for my unseasonable call; but I don't mean to stay. To-morrow is a school holiday, and I do so much want you to come and take a walk with me up around Romer's Cliff. It is so pleasant there at this time of the year; and"—

"To-morrow—Romer's Cliff!" I exclaimed. I had a right to be surprised; because now, as I stood there, looking into this man's face, I remembered that on the previous night, at this very hour, that other man, Sidney Bartol, stood just where *he* now stood, and made that same request of me, almost in the same language. "A singular coincidence," I thought. Was it not something more? How can we know?

"I am sorry, Mr. Sanders," I replied, "that I cannot go with you. I have another engagement."

He looked grave, and very disappointed.

"I had hoped Janet," he said, "that my company was agreeable to you; but lately I have almost come to think that it is not. You always refuse me when I ask you to ride or walk. I wish I could think that it is no dislike of myself that influences you." I took umbrage instantly at his words.

"You have no right to imagine my motives," I said warmly. "It should be enough for you to know that I cannot accept this invitation, and that reason is a sufficient one."

He moved a step nearer to me.

"You might have known that I would ask you to-day," he said, half reproachfully. "You know I come here every holiday."

"You pester me," I said, pretending to be a great deal more offended by his words and tone than I really was. "You talk as though you had some claim upon me, and as though I were bound to prefer you to my other friends. You know better, Mr. Sanders."

He came still nearer.

"Have you never felt like preferring me to the others?" he asked. And then I rebelled against his question, and spoke out passionately, like a child.

"I won't be catechized in this way!" I cried. "You needn't ask me any such questions, for I'll never answer them."

"Pardon me, Janet," he said, kindly, but seriously. "I did not wish to offend you. I will go now, for I see that my pres-

ence only irritates you. But first, I should like to ask you one question. Are you not going out with Bartol to-morrow? Ah! your face tells me that you are; I more than suspected it. I want to tell you, as a friend, that you had better have nothing to do with him. I don't know him—I've only seen him twice—and I can't tell just what I fear from him for you; but I tell you, Janet, he is a dangerous man for you. But you do not believe me. Well, I shall watch over you myself, as far as I can."

He bade me good-evening, and walked out of the house, leaving me puzzled, indignant and annoyed, but still not very angry at him. He had shown me his heart as plainly as a man could, and I had utterly refused to look at it. I could not help thinking, in the same instant that censured him for meddling, how kind was his way, and how gentle his voice; and I thought, as I sat there for a few moments before retiring to my chamber, that but for one thing he had said, I should think pleasantly of Ralph Sanders, as I had just seen him, and that thing was, that he had warned me against Sidney Bartol, and called him a dangerous man for me.

What right had he to say such things to me? I was not a child, who could not be trusted out of sight of my home. Mr. Bartol was a gentleman, quite as good as Ralph Sanders, if he was a stranger, and I did not choose that the latter should instruct me how I was to treat him. If Ralph did not like him, he might shun him; but so long as his attentions were agreeable to me, I would receive them, in spite of the school-master's unreasonable jealousy. For all that I cared to know of my heart just then, I liked the stranger quite as well as I did Ralph; and with these thoughts spinning through my head I went to sleep, firm in the resolution I would accompany Mr. Bartol to the Cliff on the morrow, as I had promised him, whether Ralph liked it or not.

CHAPTER II.

SOON after breakfast Mr. Bartol called. Determined to do as I pleased, in spite of my warning, I was ready to go at once, lest some sudden hesitation might cause me to disappoint him. He was dressed with unusual care—almost foppishly; but unlike most men, everything he wore became his

tall, well-poised figure. I thought his dark cheeks were thinner than usual that day; I noticed that his eyes, brilliantly black as ever, were strangely restless, and that all his movements were nervous.

"Quite ready, I see," he said, as he took my hand. I started and shuddered; his own was feverishly hot.

"I fear you are not well enough to go, Mr. Bartol," I said.

"O yes—never fear," he said, lightly. "I am a little nervous this morning, owing, I think, to an ugly dream that broke my rest last night. Did you ever dream of falling a thousand feet into the sea, and then sinking, sinking, till you awoke, just ready to die with terror and despair? Well, such was my dream; and I think it lasted me all night. But come; we've something pleasanter to think of to-day. It's as lovely an October morning as you can imagine, and Nature fairly beckons us to her. Let's away at once toward old Romer."

I followed him into the hall, and there met Aunt Janet. Mr. Bartol bowed and spoke to her, and she cautioned him to take good care of me, and bring me back early, which he promised to do.

Our home was a little way north of the village, which we just skirted as we went along the road that led to the Cliff. We passed between well kept hedges for half a mile, and then we struck off by a foot-path across the meadows. Leading through some variety of hill and hollow in the course of a mile from the highway, this path at last terminated at the foot of Romer's Cliff, which we saw lifting its gigantic battlement against the sky, while the bright morning burnished its rocky breast as with a gilding of fire.

More than once, as we walked along the highway, I had heard a sound like that of footfalls on the other side of the hedge, but I did not call the attention of my companion to it, and he did not observe it. I looked back after we had taken the path, and saw the figure of a man by the hedge-side, leaning on a gun, and gazing intently after us. I knew him at once for Ralph Sanders. And when we had crossed the first broad meadow, and as Mr. Bartol's hand assisted me over the stile, I looked back, and saw him following us very slowly, at a distance, with his gun over his shoulder.

We continued our walk. I said nothing of what I had seen; but I remembered at once

his significant words of the night before, "I shall watch over you myself, as far as I can." And now, it would seem, he had begun his espionage. If I was not angry with him the night before, I certainly was now. I accused him in my mind of hypocrisy and deceit in pretending to think this man at my side dangerous to me. Nobody else had said it, nobody had thought it, save the one who had taken it upon himself to follow me, after I had declined his company. I was sure that a miserable spirit of jealousy, and nothing else, was at the bottom of his conduct; and I resolved upon the instant that I would have nothing more to do with him. With this resolve I withdrew my thoughts from Ralph Sanders, and gave them to my companion.

Mr. Bartol was usually animated, though always serious of face; but to-day he seemed taciturn, and talked but little. Yet he was scrupulously attentive; his hand was always offered in time to assist me over the rocks, which, as we approached nearer the Cliff, began to line the way. There was one place, I remember, where a great tree had fallen right across the path; and when he had helped me upon it, my foot slipped on the wet, mossy trunk, and I would have fallen, had he not caught me. He did more; he pressed me so violently in his arms that I was frightened, and gave a little cry.

"Pardon me," he begged, releasing me in the path, "I am nervous indeed; I have not yet recovered from the effects of that hideous dream."

I looked at him; his eyes caught mine, and they seemed to burn with the intensity of the look he gave me. I shuddered again, and from that moment I avoided his gaze.

"Here is the Cliff," he said. "Let us rest for a moment before we begin the ascent."

We took our seats upon a mossy rock, and I looked from the rough, jagged fragments that was scattered at the base, up the smooth, hard face of granite that reared itself almost in a perpendicular line two hundred and seventy feet above us. Not a tree, hardly a bush, found sustenance on that granite surface, and the stunted pines that lined its summit looked from where we sat like straggling weeds. The breadth of this gigantic cliff was at its base about equal to its height; its sides sloped inwardly, so as to give it a pyramidal appearance, and its rough, rocky background gradually fell away into the

shape of a great humpback hill, which met the fields a quarter of a mile to the rear of the Cliff.

CHAPTER III.

THE place had its story. In old colonial days there was a settlement about where Monteith is now situated; and among its youth was Israel Romer, a bold, daring hunter and Indian fighter. The settlement was surprised one night by the unexpected irruption of a large band of Mohaws, its dwellings given up to the torch, and its people, men, women and children, to the tomahawk. One, the one whose scalp the Indians most desired, Israel Romer, escaped to the hill with his betrothed, a girl of the settlement. Baffled for a moment, the savages soon found the trail of his flight, and pursued him to the brow of the Cliff. With yells of fiendish exultation they rushed toward him; when he, defiant in his horrible desperation, took the girl in his arms and leaped from the very summit. Years after, when the savages had been driven forever from the neighborhood, the skeletons of the lovers were found on the rocks beneath, still locked in the embrace of death!

The occasion of our present visit here was a wish carelessly expressed to Mr. Bartol, after relating him this story, to visit the summit of the Cliff, and view the spot where this tragedy happened. His invitation followed immediately, and I had accepted it without thinking of the difficulties of the ascent; in fact, I did not know how difficult it was. But now, as I sat here with Sidney Bartol at my feet, and looked first up the face of the dizzy height, and then at the narrow path that wound its circuitous way up the hill, now along the edge of a steep descent, and now hidden by the intervening rocks, my heart failed me, and I said to my companion:—

"Let us not try to scale that toilsome path, Mr. Bartol. I am quite satisfied with what I see from below."

He turned his eyes full upon me, and they gleamed again as if with internal fire.

"What—not ascend the hill, when we have come all this way for nothing else?" he exclaimed, starting up. Come—it is not very hard—I will hold you, and we shall get up bravely."

He seized my hand, imprisoning it in his

own, so that I could not withdraw it, and drew, rather than led me to the foot of the path. I hesitated and hung back; I had it on my lips to decline positively to go up; but I found, with sudden alarm, that I was not able to control myself against him. Talking incessantly to encourage me, and pulling me up as he talked, he forced me along to the first resting-place, a great rock, fifty feet above the one where we had been sitting. We paused here for breath; and leaning faintly and wearily against it, I looked down and saw the figure of a man with a gun over his shoulder disappearing around the face of the Cliff. My heart throbbed, and at that instant I wished that I had accepted the school-master's invitation. I looked at the man beside me; he was looking straight upward, and had seen nothing below.

"Come!" he said. His hand gripped mine again; his eyes blazed with a wild, unearthly light, and, dragged unwillingly after him, I ascended the steep and crooked path. My feet were cut and bruised against the rocks that lined the way, my breath was failing, my throat was dry and husky, and a mortal fear took possession of me. With one wild, frantic effort, I released my hand from his grasp, and turned to fly; but my strength was all gone, and I sank helplessly on the path.

He turned fiercely upon me.

"No more, no more, Mr. Bartol, I beseech you!" was my pitiful cry. "Please let me go home; don't urge me any further."

"Not a step backward!" he shouted. "Up, up, till we reach the highest summit—no faltering, no hesitating."

I made no answer. His face was terrible in its wildness to look upon; his eyes shone with frenzy, and the exercise had brought a vivid flush to his dark face. I hid mine that I might not see his.

"Come!"

He stamped his foot impatiently. The next instant he seized me bodily, and swung me to his shoulder and ran upward like an antelope along the path. As he held me in his arms, my head overhung a frightful precipice, while his feet trod close on the borders of it; the terror was too much for me; I fainted outright.

A cool breeze blew over my face, and brought me to life again. I was lying on the grass; Bartol stood with folded arms be-

side me, gazing out upon the prospect. I started to my feet, and a single glance showed me that we stood on the apex of the Cliff, hardly three yards from the edge. At any other time my soul would be enraptured with the glorious beauty of the spectacle that burst upon my sight. Touched with the gorgeous coloring of October, the country below lay spread out before us, its diversity of field, forest and farm stretching away for miles, until it lost itself in the horizon. I looked, and wondered, and almost forgot how I had come here; but the voice of Bartol quickly brought me back to the full horror of my situation.

"Look how glorious it is!" he cried, seizing my arm with one hand, and waving the other with the full sweep of his arm. "How glorious — how beautiful — how mighty! Look—look!"

The gleam of his eyes was not now casual and at intervals; it was habitual. He quivered in every muscle with excitement; his hand gripped my arm so closely that it gave me intense pain; utter vacuity was in his face. The appalling truth was before me; the man was a maniac.

Had a single moment been left me in which to reflect upon the horrors of my situation, I think I should have died with the thought; but he gave me no time.

"What more fitting place for a bridal, my beloved!" he exclaimed, laughing gleefully. "You did not know why we came here; it is that we might be wedded here, and united beyond the chance of separation. Don't you remember the pretty story you told me of the lovers who were united here, long ago? So will we be joined, and the world at our feet shall witness our eternal betrothal. Come, sweetheart; I have chosen you; come!"

I cast my eyes down at his feet, praying, imploring him to spare me. I might as well have prayed to the rocks around me. Again he caught me in his arms, and strode straight towards the end of the Cliff. A word of prayer was upon my lips; I was about to close my eyes forever upon the beautiful world I loved so well; I thought once of dear Aunt Janet, and murmured, "God have mercy!"

And then——

My head hung forward upon his breast; the prospect was inverted to my eyes. Four steps more would launch us into eternity. At the instant a light puff of smoke floated

out of the bushes far below the foot of the Cliff—so far that I could plainly see it over the edge. Bartol took one step more, staggered, brought his hand to his heart with a groan, and dropped me to the ground. A dreadful imprecation followed; he stumbled over me; I looked up, and found myself alone!

Some horrible fascination urged me to look over the edge of the Cliff. On my hands and knees I crept thither, and grasping the bushes with tenacious fingers, gazed into the fearful void below. Far, far down on the edge of the rocks lay all that remained of the maniac; and I saw approaching it the tiny figure of a man with something carried across his shoulder. I drew back upon the edge; the revulsion overcame me; all was dark again.

It was long before I woke that time. But thank God, when I did, it was in my own chamber at home, with dear Aunt Janet bending over me. The sun of another day was shining in through the blinds; the terror of the day that was gone came back to me only as a dream; I sat up in bed, and smiled back recognition to Aunt Janet's anxious look.

"Thank God, darling, it hasn't crazed you," she said, as she kissed me.

"There's some one down-stairs who wants to see you," she said, after a moment.

"Ralph?" I questioned. She nodded, and said:—

"You must know that it was he that saved you. The telescope sights on his rifle made him sure of his aim; and he brought you all the way home in his arms."

"Let him come up, auntie." And he soon came.

His eyes sparkled with joy when I offered him my hand; but I did more. I drew his head down to me, and kissed his forehead, whispering in his ear:—

"If you can forget my naughty words, dear Ralph"——

He stopped my mouth with a kiss, and I was content to say no more.

We learned all about Sidney Bartol three weeks afterward, when his friends came from North Carolina to take his body home. The sudden death of his betrothed on the very night before the wedding-day had driven him crazy; and after haunting her grave for a week he disappeared, leaving a letter which declared that his beloved was

not dead, and that he had gone to find her. From that day until the news of his tragic fate reached them, they had heard nothing of him. With the deep cunning of insanity he had succeeded in hiding his real condition of mind until the moment when I sat with him under Romer's Cliff. His friends who saw me said I was strangely like the dead girl in form and face; and this they thought the reason of his attraction toward me.

And this, dear Laura, is my story; excepting that he whom I have called Ralph Sanders was really Ralph Clymer, now my dear husband. Aunt Janet had always liked him, and after this adventure, she said that

she thought I needed somebody to take care of me, and intimated that she should not object to a speedy marriage with him. We lived with her until she died, some five years after; and she, kind old soul, left me all her property.

I am happy, Laura; I have been happy ever since the day that gave me to Ralph Clymer. But you will not wonder, after what I have told you, that hideous vision often disturbs my sleep at night, and sometimes follows me into the pleasures and duties of the day. But they are only shadows; thank Heaven, they are only shadows!

THE PRINCESS AND THE PLUMS.

BY FANNIE WILLIAMS.

THREE knights on horseback met one day where two roads crossed. The knight who came from the North had blue eyes and yellow hair, and a great golden beard flowed over his mail-clad breast. He bore a white banner with a black raven worked upon it, and a raven and a serpent were emblazoned on his shield of shimmering gold. He rode a milk-white war-horse, and its feet were shod with golden shoes.

The one who came from the East was tall and stately, with flashing dark eyes, and long black ringlets falling on his shoulders. He rode a coal-black charger, his hauberk was of glittering steel, his helmet was of brass, and the device upon his shield displayed two bears holding a jewelled crown.

He who came from the West was noble of face and form, and bore himself with an air of pride. His gray eyes had a piercing glance, his bearded lip was haughty as a king's, and short brown curls were clustered thickly underneath his nodding crest. He was clad in a suit of Milan armor, inlaid with gold, which shone with dazzling brightness; and costly jewels glittered all over the harness of his red-roan steed. He bore a lion on his shield, and a blood-red cross upon his floating pennon.

When the three knights came together at the crossing, they each drew rein, and the first one spoke:—

"How now, good comrades! Are we friends or foes?"

"I am a good friend if you please, and a bad foe if it suits you better!" returned the black-eyed knight.

"And I am a friend to all the good and a foe to all the wicked," said the lion knight.

"Oh, it is plain to see that we are all honest men!" laughed the first, good-naturedly. "As for me, my name is Harold, and I come from Denmark."

"And I am Waldomar of Russia, a prince of royal blood, and not unknown to fame," said the second, proudly. "In many a rattling fray I still have borne me like a knight."

"I am no stranger to your fame, Sir Harold and Sir Waldomar," said the third knight, quietly; "and perhaps you know my banner, if you never heard my name. Men call me Palmerin of England."

"We know both name and banner, and so does every one that ever heard a tale of knightly deed!" exclaimed the Danish knight. "Well met, Sir Palmerin!"

"What! is it Palmerin the Bold?" cried Waldomar. "Well met, indeed, and I hope we journey in the same direction?"

"My way lies towards the south," said Palmerin.

"And mine," said Waldomar.

"And mine," said Harold.

Sir Palmerin looked from the Russian to the Dane, and smiled a meaning smile.

"Are we all riding on the same errand, good brothers?" he asked.

"Good faith, I hope not!" cried Sir Harold; "for I am bound to Bohemia as a suitor for the hand and heart of the peerless Lady Isolette."

"And so am I!" said Waldomar.

"And I," said Palmerin.

Then the three knights looked at each other in silence. He of England was the first to speak.

"It appears that we are rivals," he remarked; yet I see no reason why we need be enemies. Come, let us join company and go to Bohemia together; and let the lady choose between us as she will."

"That is fair enough," said Harold.

"I agree," said Waldomar.

So the three knights took the road that led toward the South. For three days they rode on, side by side, and at sunset of the third day, they came to a castle in Bohemia, where dwelt the Princess Isolette, the fairest of the fair. Each blew a blast upon the bugle horn that hung beside the castle gate, and quickly the gray-haired sensechal came out to let them in.

"You are welcome, noble knights," he said; "and I think I can guess your business here."

"We are suitors to the Lady Isolette," said Harold the Dane.

"And not the first," smiled the seneschal, but gravely added, "and I fear you will not be the last, although my lady must indeed be hard to please, if she takes not one of you; for three such princely knights never yet came here together. Come in, I pray you," he continued, throwing open the gate. "You and your steeds shall have the best cheer the castle offers, and to-morrow morn my lady will see you and give you her decision."

He led the way within the castle, and the three knights followed him to the banquet hall, where they were served with a supper fit to set before a king; after which they were provided with lodgings in a grand chamber which might also have suited a royal guest. Whatever might be the lady's answer to their suits, they certainly could find no fault with their entertainment.

In the morning, they rose and prepared to pay their court to the princess, who sent them word that she would see them directly

after breakfast. So they hurried over their breakfast as fast as possible, and then the seneschal came to conduct them to the lady's presence.

They found her waiting for them on a marble terrace at the back of the castle, from which a long flight of steps led down to a beautiful garden. She turned to greet them with a smile of such entrancing sweetness that each began to tremble for fear he should not win so beautiful a creature. Her form was graceful as a bending willow, her face was like a lily in the sun, her hazel eyes were soft and bright, and her golden comb could scarcely hold up the abundance of her auburn hair.

The three knights bent their knees before her, and kissed her snow-white hands; and Harold, the Danish knight, exclaimed:—

"Fair princess, my name and station are already known to you; and I am come from Denmark to pray you to bestow on me your hand in marriage."

The dark-eyed Russian said:—

"And I am come from Russia, sweet lady, to woo you for my bride. I need not tell you who I am, for you have seen Prince Waldomar in many a tournament."

And last the English warrior spoke:—

"Lady, I scarcely dare to hope that fame has been so kind to me as to these, my brother knights. My name is Palmerin, my blood is royal, and my native land is England. I also am your lover, lady fair."

Then the princess answered:—

"Brave knights, I know you all by reputation, and two of you by sight; and though I never saw Sir Palmerin till now, yet I think the rumor tells no lie that calls him a very valorous knight. It is no easy matter to make a choice between three knights of such high esteem; therefore I will leave the decision to yourselves. He who shall solve a problem which I will propose to you, shall have me for his bride; and if neither of you can give me the correct answer, I will reject you all."

She beckoned to a little page who followed behind her, carrying a willow basket; and taking the basket from his hand, she again addressed the rival knights.

"I have here," she said, "in my basket, a gift of plums for each of you, picked from my garden. One of you shall have half and one more, the second shall again have half and one more, and the third shall have half and three more. This will empty my bas-

ket. Now tell me how many plums are in it?"

With a very blank countenance, the Danish knight spoke first.

"There are three-score," said he, making a random guess.

"No," replied the lady; "but if there were as many more, half as many more, and a third as many more as there are now in the basket, with five more added to that, the number would by so much exceed three-score as it now falls short of it."

The Russian knight looked very much bewildered, as he speculated on forty-five.

"Not so," said the princess; "but if there were a third as many more, and a sixth as many more as there are now, there would be in my basket as many more than forty-

five as there are now under that number."

"Lady, the number is thirty," said Palmerin of England, with a quiet smile.

"Right!" exclaimed the lady; "and you are the first of two-score knights and three that has been able to answer a problem of my offering."

She then counted him out fifteen plums and one more, and there remained fourteen. To Sir Waldomar, she gave seven and one more, and six remained. To Sir Harold, she gave half of these and three more; and the basket was empty.

And so Sir Palmerin of England won the Princess Isolette for his bride; and the discarded knights went away with their heads in a whirl, and their mouths full of plums.

THE KLEPTOMANIAC.

THE world of fashionable London society was startled a few years ago by reports of a series of daring jewel robberies. The most costly gems seemed to disappear as if by magic under the very eyes of their owners. These robberies defied detection. A clew in one case was upset by the facts in another. When my aid as private detective was called in, I resolved to confine my attention to three distinct cases; though, of course, if useful information came in my way concerning other matters, I should know how to take advantage of it.

The first of the three on my list was the case of the Dowager Lady A., a somewhat eccentric old lady, who found her chief delight in arraying herself in her most valuable jewels, and visiting in regular rotation all the West End theatres. One night, when returning from one of these expeditions, her carriage had been overturned by colliding with an omnibus. The dowager was seriously injured, and within a few days she was dead. Then, apparently for the first time, it was discovered that the whole of the jewels worn by Lady A. on the night of the carriage accident had mysteriously disappeared. Her maid was so overcome by the sight of her injured mistress, that she failed altogether to remember what was done with these jewels at the moment when

her ladyship was undressed. It was even a question whether they might not have been actually lost in the street during the confusion of the accident. At all events, no trace of them could be found, and it soon became evident that in the excitement of summoning relatives, doctors, nurses and undertakers, half-a-dozen persons might have entered the house and walked off with the jewels without any chance of detection.

Then I turned my attention to the second case—that of a young Countess of B. There seemed less room for doubt in this instance. The fashionable wedding of the autumn had been that of Earl of B. with Miss Blank. On the morning of the wedding, the earl had presented his bride with a magnificent tiara of diamonds. As the "happy pair" were to start almost immediately for the continent, these diamonds, inclosed in a case, were hastily packed in a traveling bag, which the bride's traveling maid was never to let out of sight. On arriving at Paris, the bag was apparently intact; but on opening the jewel-case, the tiara was missing. Clearly, it must have been cleverly extracted from the case while lying in the bride's dressing-room, the empty case then being placed in the bag. Who had stolen the countess's diamonds? The maid, the bride's mother, and a younger

brother had alone, as far as it was known, entered the room where the jewels were lying. I don't mind saying I had some difficulty in believing that a *bona fide* robbery had been committed. You may not believe it, but I am convinced that many a startling robbery of jewels would be explained, if we knew of all the private debts incurred by ladies of fashion, and of the sacrifices sometimes made by them to screen from disgrace themselves or some deeply involved connection.

Meanwhile, I made inquiries concerning robbery number three. This was at Colonel C.'s. There the only thing missed was a valuable bracelet. There had been a dance at the house. During the evening Mrs. C. had slipped and sprained her ankle so severely that a doctor had to be summoned, and the party was somewhat prematurely brought to a close. Mrs. C. distinctly remembered wearing the bracelet; but whether she had it on at the moment of falling, she could not remember. There had been naturally some confusion in the ballroom, and the lady had been carried to her own room. It was not for some hours that the loss of the bracelet was noticed. Then a search was made, but altogether without success.

In the first and third of these cases, suspicion seemed to point at once to some member of the household; but all my inquiries failed to find any trace of the missing property. The servants all willingly consented, nay, even offered, to have their boxes searched, and for some weeks I confessed myself baffled. The missing property had disappeared as completely as though it had never existed.

Again and again I went over the whole circumstances as they had been related to me. There was, I reflected, one circumstance common to all three of the robberies, if robberies they were. There had been at the time some unusual amount of confusion, all lending opportunity for a theft to take place without immediate detection. The Dowager Lady A.'s diamonds had been stolen during her illness, or about the time of her death. The Countess of B. had lost her diamonds during the excitement of a wedding breakfast at an hotel. At Colonel C.'s house, there had been a ball on the night when the bracelet was lost. Was there anyone, I asked myself, who, by chance or intention, had been present at each place at the time of the robbery? Any

occasional waiter, for example, or servant of any kind? I could not find that there had been. Yet, if the thief were not one of the household, how was it that a stranger should in three separate instances fix on an establishment where the circumstances were favorable to a robbery of valuable property? In two cases, there had been illness and a hasty summoning of doctors. That led to another thought: was it possible that some experienced thief or gang of thieves had laid themselves out to track the broughams of fashionable West End physicians, on the chance of finding hall doors left open, and property somewhat loosely guarded?

I had not thought of such a thing seriously before; but it seemed now to be an idea worth following up. Once more I resumed inquiries. Who was the doctor summoned in the case of the Dowager Lady A.? I easily ascertained. It was one of the best known men, at that time, in London. He and his brougham would be familiar to every thief who frequented West End thoroughfares. I next inquired at Colonel C.'s. To my satisfaction, I learned that the same doctor had attended in this case. "Here," I said to myself, "I begin to see daylight." Shortly afterwards, I made a further discovery. The coachman who drove the famous physician to Lady A.'s on the night of the accident, and to Colonel C.'s on the night of the ball, had only been in his employ a few weeks; and on the date of the Earl of B.'s wedding, the man had driven the carriage of one of the guests at the breakfast.

The clew I felt was becoming strong. The thief, I grew convinced, was a confederate of the grave-faced man in spotless black who drove the fashionable doctor from one house of sickness to another. I resolved to obtain an interview with the doctor, and after explaining my suspicions, plan some mode of detecting so consummate a rascal. Circumstances occurred to make me resolve to carry out my purpose without delay.

My journey took me to one of the somewhat sombre-looking streets that run down to the Thames and Battersea Bridge. The name "Gideon West, M. D., Physician and Surgeon," inscribed on a brass plate, told me when I had reached my destination. Dr. West, I was informed, was still out, late though it was; and the time of his coming home was most uncertain. I was determined, however, not to return without

seeing him; and after assuring the tired-looking servant that I should certainly await Dr. West's return, even if I had to spend the night on the doorstep, I was shown into the consulting-room, where a wood fire was still burning on the hearth. Seating myself in an arm-chair with a high screen behind me, I settled down to my vigil, however long it might be.

I had often noticed the house; for who did not feel some interest in so famous a medical man as Gideon West? Why he had chosen such a house I did not learn until afterwards; but I knew it was an old-fashioned, rambling sort of place, with a room built on here at one time, and there at another time. Windows had been blocked up at one place, and windows had been let in at another. In fact, it was a house that seemed to defy a stranger to explain upon what rule, or what want of rule, it had been so constructed.

Those who first heard of Gideon West as one of the most famous physicians in London, asked in astonishment how he could live in such a ramshackle-looking building. Perhaps they forgot that even famous doctors were not born famous. Gideon West, when he entered on his professional career, was anything but famous, and he was as poor as he well could be. Father and mother were dead, brothers and sisters he had none. An almost forgotten god-mother had, to his surprise, left him the old house at Chelsea. This was almost the time he received his diploma. Thereupon, Gideon West married, for love, a girl without a penny, settled himself in his new possession, had a brass plate affixed to the door, and awaited the patients who were to prove his skill and make his fortune. It was a weary waiting; but the young bride had unlimited trust in her husband, and Gideon West never for an instant lost faith in himself. Slowly, very slowly, a small practice grew upon his hands; but the struggle that only braced Gideon West for the battle of life proved too terrible for the frail young wife. But there was no complaining, no repining, no word to tell of doubt, much less of despair, and Gideon West battled on. He knew, as though it had already come, that he should at last prevail. He had measured his own strength, and felt that he could trust it. But—and it was that *but* alone which troubled him—suppose he should have to wait years and years; suppose, as those

years went by, he should see the color pale on the face he loved, the brightness fade from the eyes he delighted to gaze into; suppose his long years of waiting were marked in the lines on his wife's young face; suppose when the golden gates of fortune flew open, he should find it was—too late!

How long I sat dreaming in Dr. West's room, I know not; but it is certain I must have fallen asleep before the crackling embers. When I awoke, I found myself in all but darkness. The gas had been lowered, and only a flickering glow from the dying fire remained to cast drear and fantastic shadows on the ceiling. Many hours must have passed. I must have been forgotten when the servants retired to rest, and Dr. West either had not returned, or had not been made aware of my presence. My position was embarrassing. To wake up in the middle of the night and to find myself in a strange house, was a new experience. I groped about the room and felt for the door by which I had entered. It was locked. Bell of any sort I could find none. I tried to raise my voice, but the death-stillness and darkness of the room seemed to stifle me. I found the window, and looked out. It opened high above a court-yard closed in by walls. Again I tried the door. Then I remembered that it was a sort of passage-room, that there was a door leading from it to an apartment beyond. I managed to find this door, covered as it was with heavy tapestry hangings. Feeling very much like a thief, I tried the handle. It turned in my hand, and the door yielded noiselessly. Beyond, I saw a large square chamber, evidently a bedroom, but the bed was unoccupied. It was a quaint and haunted-looking room, with high oaken skirting and panelled ceiling. A couple of candles burned on the dressing-table, and threw a faint light over the dark furniture and the tapestries that hung against the walls.

Once more I tried to call out, but my tongue seemed dried up, and my voice refused to be heard. Presently, to my relief, I heard a human voice. It evidently came from an apartment beyond the one into which I had ventured. Impelled, I hardly knew how, I resolved to venture farther; and as my footsteps fell noiselessly on the thick carpet, I could hardly believe I was not wandering in a dream through the mysterious chambers of the dead.

Yet more and more distinctly I heard the sad low voice that had caught my ear; and I approached stealthily, and I confess with something like awe, the door, which, as I perceived, opened from the bedroom to the chamber whence the voice proceeded. Here, as before, a curtain of antique tapestry, reaching from the ceiling to the floor, concealed the aperture; and trying cautiously the door, I found that it opened towards me. This gave me time to reflect before intruding, with stealthy steps, in the dead of night, into the privacy of this innermost chamber. Like a guilty creature, I stood and listened. The voice—for there seemed to be but one—was close at hand. It was a strangely melancholy voice, yet possessing a fascinating power that chained me to the spot.

"Will you never, never speak to me again, my darling, my darling!" I heard the words too plainly to mistake or forget them. "Will you never speak to me again! Year after year, as the day comes round, I have prayed to God to grant me but one sweet word—one word to tell me of your love! Oh, my darling, my darling, have I prayed in vain? Will those lips never again open with a smile, those eyes never again look into mine.

These strange words reproached me. Into what sacred precincts had I intruded? What heart-breaking grief was I desecrating?

Suddenly the tone of voice changed. The sad pathos gave way to accents of joy. "See! see! my beloved one, here are gifts worthy of a queen. Did I not tell you the time would come when all our struggles would be over, when there would be no more fighting for very bread, no more daily care, no more dread of the future, no fears for success, because it would be already mine! Ah, Gertrude, my wife, my darling, you were good and patient to me in those days. If the clouds were dark, your eyes were always bright, if the heavens were overcast, your smile drove away the storm, your voice was the music of my life, your ceaseless trust was my lodestar. But all has changed. Those days have passed. I am rich now; they say I am famous. The day is now too short for my work, and the night too short for rest. And yet I need rest. My brain is ever reeling with its weariness, yet I cannot sleep. Night after night is one long vigil. No sleep, no rest,

no peace! I have been waiting for this night, for you, my love, for you! And now the hour has come. It is Christmas morning. Hark! already I hear the sound of the Christmas bells. Ah! no wonder, for my wife, my beloved, has come back to me at last—come back to me from the dead!"

In feverish excitement I listened. But there was no answer—not a sound, when that trembling voice ceased to break the stillness of the night.

Presently it began again. "They tell me it is thirty years ago. Nonsense! That is only a dream. It was yesterday—yesterday, that you bade me good-by, and kissed me when I went away. And to-day, you are as you were then. No change, no change, none at all. You are as young and as fair as when I first took your hand in mine and called you 'wife.'"

Then there was a pause, and I was conscious of some movement beyond the tapestry behind which I was guiltily hiding.

What followed startled me, but it called me back to life. With a voice thrilling with emotion, the man once more broke the silence. "Gertrude! These are yours. This is your birthday, and our old wedding-day, and I have not forgotten you. You do not yet believe that I am rich and famous, and that your husband has many friends. See! These are gifts from those whom I have rescued from death! They are thank-offerings to the 'doctor's wife.' Here is a bracelet. It is set with emeralds. No rarer could be found. Ah! how charming it looks on that dainty wrist! And here is something a princess may wear. It is a tiara of diamonds, and it is yours. Ah, my wife, let me place it on your brow! Oh, my queen, my queen!"

Unable to restrain myself longer, I cautiously drew aside the tapestry and peered into the chamber beyond it. It was comparatively small, but richly furnished, though in the fashion of olden times. It was, I thought, a lady's boudoir; but from where I was concealed, only a portion of the room was revealed to my view. It was not the room that arrested my attention, but what it contained. On a small table, almost within reach, lay those very ornaments—the ear-rings, the necklet, the pendant—of rubies and pearls, the loss of which had first led me to unravel, if I could, the mystery of the jewel robbery. I could not be mistaken. The description given me had been most

minute. An exact counterpart of the set was not in existence; and here it lay on the table before me.

As I looked on with astonishment, from the part of the room I could not see, there approached me, slowly and with pensive step and bowed head, like one walking in his sleep, the man whom I now almost dreaded to see—the famous doctor, Gideon West.

Could he be the author of these mysterious thefts? I could not believe it, and yet the proofs of his guilt lay before me. No longer hesitating, I stepped forward. So sudden and so unexpected was my appearance, that the man was unconscious of my presence until I had placed my hands upon his arm and gasped in trembling tones: "Dr. West—I—arrest"—But the sentence was never completed.

With a cry that might have been heard almost in the grave, the unhappy man shrank from me. At that instant, I turned in the direction to which he was pointing, with that agonized look upon his face; and as I did so, I loosened my hold, and my hands fell powerless to my side. In the corner of the chamber hitherto hidden from me, I saw one of those old-fashioned bedsteads, with heavy draperies around it. The curtains were of silk, once a pearly white, now dulled and faded by age. The counterpane and pillow, once like driven snow, were white no more. Lying on the bed, with her head on the pillow, and her body partially concealed by the bed-linen, I saw the form of a woman—a woman who must once have been fair and beautiful to behold. Her luxuriant hair fell in wreaths on each side of her face, and was then brought together over the bare white throat. Her arms were uncovered by the counterpane, and, clasping an infant child in their embrace, lay folded across her breast.

As I realized all the details of what seemed like a vision, I confess that my nerves failed me. I could only look at that cold, pale face, lying so still on the pillow, with the child-face nestling beside it; and as I looked, I realized that the stillness was the stillness of death.

Like one entranced, I remained motionless for some moments, when again I was aroused to action.

A figure clothed in white, the face scarcely less pale than the face of the dead, the scanty locks of hair, white with age, hanging loosely about her shoulders, the eyes fixed on the bed, and the hands stretched out supple-

ingly towards it, glided into the room. Then catching sight of the prostrate figure of the man who had cast himself beside the bed, with his hands spread out on the form that lay there, this apparition of woe, turning on me a glance of reproach that will haunt me to my dying day, exclaimed, amid streaming tears: "You have killed my son! My son, my son!"

And now, how shall I finish my story without wearying you with explanations? Let me go back to that old question once asked by Gideon West, "What if success should come too late?" For all the happiness it could bring him, it did come too late. His struggle with fate, if not a long, had been a bitter one. There fell a grievous sickness on the neighborhood; disease and death stalked abroad, and mowed down their victims without counting the numbers. Against the grim tyrants, Gideon West fought day and night; his energy was endless, his courage undaunted; and he triumphed. No, not Gideon West, but the weapons of science triumphed in his hands. Disease and death were driven from the field; as they fled, they shot one last bolt at their victor, it glanced off his armor, but left his wife and child dead at his side.

Yes, he had won. But what was the victory worth? Fame, reward, wealth, all were his; but the one hope of life was dead. Yet he never spared himself—never ceased work for a day—never hesitated at any sacrifice. He lived, he said, for only one object—it was to "wear out his life." The old home knew him to the end, and one faithful and devoted woman gave all her years to cheer the one hero of her life, the poor, struggling surgeon, the great physician—the man who for pure love had married her only child, Gertrude's husband!

But the end came suddenly at last, and outwardly there seemed to be no signs of failing power. The mind seemed as fresh and as vigorous as ever. Only in one direction did it give way. Years of never-ceasing brooding over his dead wife and child did its work; and as the sad anniversary of his wife's birthday, her marriage, and of her death, once more approached, the strain overpowered him. A mania seized him; he must offer her the most costly treasures. Yet they must not appear to come from him, but from others, from those who owed their health, their life, to his skill. They must be

proofs of his fame—proofs to the dead wife of her husband's triumph. The mania grew upon him. Wherever he saw anything that was of peculiar value, he seemed to claim it as his own, fully persuaded, as I believe, that it was a willing offering to the memory of his dead wife. And so those once inexplicable disappearances were explained. No one suspected, would dream of suspecting, the great doctor; and sane in everything else yet with his brilliant intellect already ripe for decay, the unhappy man for weeks past had been the victim of a mania he neither comprehended nor was able to resist. I learned afterwards that a medical conference had taken him to the house where the countess's diamonds were lost on that particular morning, and he must by accident have entered the room where the diamonds were momentarily left unguarded, and at once been led, by an irresistible impulse, to possess them.

Before I left that strangely haunted house at Chelsea on that Christmas morning, the twice-stricken mother led me to the dread bedside and placed my hands on the cold face. I looked at the mother, and then I felt the white hands that lay clasped before

me. The woman read my thoughts aright.

"No," she whispered, "it is not the flesh of mortal! It is but a fearful counterfeit of death. It was modeled from the dead wife and child, and was to have been reproduced in marble for Gertrude's tomb. But Gideon West would not have it removed. Call it a morbid fancy or a passionate love, which you will; but for years he has spent the hours of his solitude beside this poor image of his wife! Now, tell me, was yonder man a thief, or was he the victim to unconquerable mania?"

For Gideon West was dead, and his secret died with him.

We laid him on his own bed; and when the coroner's jury said next day that he died "by the visitation of God," they spoke the truth.

The lost jewels were restored to their owners with the simple explanation that he who had taken them was beyond the reach of human justice.

For my part in the restitution, I was generously rewarded; but it was the last investigation I ever undertook. Many years have passed, and the world soon forgets; but I thought it would interest some to learn what I knew concerning the Jewel Robbery.

THE ANGELS OF LOVE AND DEATH.

BY SHIRLEY WYNNE.

OVER the beautiful, sunlit sea
A radiant angel is coming to me;
On the path of gold burning far away,
From the sinking sun o'er the lustrous bay,
He is coming, coming! Upon the shore
I watch him, nearing evermore;
I see the gleam of his shining wings,
I hear the thrilling song he sings,
I see the light in his wooing eyes—
Brighter than o'er show the cloudless skies.
My heart is aching with bliss too great
To be less than pain, as I watch and wait.
Ah, now we have met! I have ceased to pray;
For Heav'n's best gift is mine to-day.

Over the beautiful, moonlit sea
A radiant angel is coming to me;
Over the silvery path that lies
Leading away to the far-off skies,
Still and solemn and calm and fair,
A crown of stars on his shadowy hair;
He sings a song so holy and sweet
That my heart is yearning his eyes to meet.
I watch—I wait—for the blessed rest
I shall know when he folds me to his breast,
And my weary pulses cease to beat
At the touch of his lips, so cold and sweet.
Ah, now we have met! 'Tis not I who pray;
For Heav'n's best gift is mine to-day!

THE WRECK OF THE ATLAS.*

A TALE OF THE SEASIDE.

BY RAY THOMPSON,

CHAPTER V.

UPON reaching his room at the hotel, Haldane donned dry clothing with all possible speed, after which he proceeded to indite several letters in rapid succession. With the exception of the last one, over which the writer lingered with the hesitancy of one who is scarcely master of his own actions, the missives were sealed and addressed as soon as written. The letter which seemed to demand double scrutiny, was addressed to "Mr. William Artell, No. 235 Twelfth St., New York City," and was as follows:—

"DEAR FELLOW CONSPIRATOR: This is to inform you that I reached Netherby last evening, and that I met the girl this morning under circumstances that may or may not be favorable to the furtherance of my plans. It is impossible, at present, to predict success, but unless fate proves unusually adverse, I see no reason why I may not hope to win the last move in the game. Of course, in an affair of this kind, nothing can be done in a hurry, so I shall expect you to gain for me as much time as you possibly can. Thornton being my heaviest and most influential creditor, you must get him to renew the two notes, taking care to let everybody on the street know what he has done. This will go a long way towards sustaining my sinking credit, and, likely enough, may keep me afloat until I put myself on a solid foundation. So far as you are concerned, you have only to put on a bold face and busy yourself in doing nothing. As my agent, authorized to act in my absence, you must talk largely of invoices and consignments, and hint at immense transfers of stock. Offer to sell anything and everything, from a thousand Cuban cigars to a cargo of cod-liver oil. Above all, make no mystery of my absence and whereabouts. Forward all letters to my address at this place, and let everybody know that I am where I can be reached by telegram. I have always remarked that when a man can be easily

found, no one is particularly anxious to find him. If any one asks about my return, say that I am likely to remain several weeks at Netherby, but that I shall visit New York at frequent intervals. In the meantime, if you catch me in the city until my present prospects are brighter, you may consider it an act of kindness to clap me into a straight-jacket, and secure me in close quarters in the nearest lunatic asylum.

"So much for your duty in the premises; now for my own. The capture of the Thornton heiress is an undertaking which will require both nerve and skill. Without pretending to lack any qualification necessary to the success of the scheme, I confess that the exploit promises to be more difficult than I have imagined it would. In the first place the young lady is not boarding at the hotel, but is living at the home of a sea-captain who has grown gray in her father's employ. The skipper is a sly old rat, and from a recent interview with him, I am led to believe that he has sized me up with the accuracy of a Broadway tailor. Miss Dorkey, —the antediluvian aunt,—is staying with her niece; but the two have nothing in common and are likely to be but little together, so I anticipate nothing serious in the way of feminine interference. My greatest danger lies in the direction of the meddlesome skipper, and it is possible that even he may not prove a very formidable antagonist. At all events, once blessed with the girl's consent, nothing on earth or in New Jersey will prevent a private marriage. The deed accomplished, a reconciliation with Thornton may be safely reckoned on; and with a millionaire father-in-law to endorse my paper, I can settle old debts and contract new ones with my usual promptitude. As your share of the spoil is to be in proportion to your assistance, I sincerely hope that you may merit a large one.

"I have written a long letter, and one that I think will be intelligible. This being the case, I need not caution you to destroy it as soon as it is read. Write me daily, letting me know how affairs go on in the city.

I will keep you duly advised as to matters at this end of the route, and until the game is either lost or won, will remain

"Yours in good faith, A. H."

After studying the above letter for several moments with an air of perplexity and indecision, Haldane finally sealed it, and sent it with the others to be mailed. This done, he learned back in his chair, and with his hands clasped behind his head, indulged in a reverie which, to judge from the expression of his countenance, was anything but pleasant.

Who can tell whether men of his stamp know what it is to mourn—whether anger at being thwarted is not the nearest approach to sorrow that they ever feel? And yet, there was that in Arthur Haldane's past record, which should have occasioned him deep and lasting sorrow. Born of wealthy parents in a thriving English town, he might have led a pleasant, happy life; whereas, a review of his checkered career presented anything but a cheerful retrospect. Expulsion from a great school at thirteen; three years' constant dissipation and secret wickedness in the family of a private tutor; a situation in a London mercantile house, lost through irregular habits and dishonesty; a long series of years passed in wandering aimlessly about the continent; a mock marriage contracted with an Italian opera singer; exposure, and a hasty flight to America, ending in unsuccessful speculation in New York, made up the dim outlines of a life whose minute details need not be fully described.

In the midst of his self-communings, Haldane's reflection took a practical turn, and might have been summed up in this one resolve: "I must go a step farther on the downward course, which, after all, may lead me to my proper level."

"In what a mesh does the want of money involve a man," he soliloquized, as he stretched himself uneasily in his chair. "Had I sold a certain quantity of indigo one day earlier than I did, or had I bought a cargo of coffee which was awaiting a sale, how different would have been my position to-day. That the mere hazard of a choice should influence a man's whole life, is a pretty fair instance of fortune's fickleness. Had I hit the market, I should now be the favored friend of the merchant princes. Fate willed it otherwise, and here I am,

actually plotting a runaway match with a girl who is almost a stranger, in the faint hope that by a combination of fortunate happenings, her father's wealth may put me on my feet and enable me to face the world again. Such has been my lot in life—always taking desperate chances, forever playing against heavy odds, and usually losing in the end. It remains to be seen whether my present venture will prove successful. It is almost a comfort to know that in case it does not, it will, in all probability, be my last."

As these thoughts passed through his mind, weariness and the silence of the quiet house, induced slumber. Although he made an effort to arouse himself, the schemer fell into a troubled sleep.

In the meantime, a tiny vessel riding at anchor on the distant fishing ground, rocks easily on the gentle swell. On board the craft, Tom Bagley, seated on an inverted bucket, is busily engaged in repairing a fishing net. He plies his needle industriously, answering the questions of his elderly companion without lifting his eyes, or pausing in his work.

"So Cap'n Jack brought a gal aboard this mornin', did he?" remarks Abel Shirley, inquisitively.

The young man murmurs a gruff assent.

"I've heard about her," resumes the old man, shrewdly. "Cap'n Jack told everybody how that her father sent her down from New York, to see if the change won't 'liven up her speerits.'"

"She's come to a good place for excitement," says Tom, contemptuously.

"She's come to a good place for rest and enjoyment, and most likely that's what she's arter. Them New York gals dance, and caper, and cut up all winter in the city, and when it comes spring, they're obleeged to be turned out to pastur', so's to pick up their crumbs."

"How do you know what the New York girls do in the winter?" asks Tom, incredulously.

"How do I know what the fish do in the sea," responds the old man; and with an angry snort, he stumps forward, leaving his nephew to finish his task undisturbed.

"If there's anybody in the world that isn't loaded down with trouble, I'd just like to know it," mutters Tom, driving his needle spitefully among the twine meshes. "Ever since I saw that girl, I've been comparing her lot with mine, and wondering

whether it was possible for her to know anything about sorrow; and now, it seems, she's full of it. That's what Uncle Abel hints at, and quite likely he's right. She's the sort of person to lie awake in the night, crying over a bit of foolishness that would only start my temper. Why can't I take her burden, whatever it may be, and plod along with it? I am carrying so much already that a little extra weight wouldn't be noticed. Well, it looks to be a queer world, but perhaps Providence is serving everybody in it pretty much alike, after all."

Tom finds considerable comfort in this reflection, and from envying his fair visitor of the morning, he falls to pitying her, as one who has unexpectedly proved to be a companion in misery. "If she was to come aboard again, I'd act differently," he says, very softly. "Now I think of it, she seemed half frightened at the way I talked to Captain Jack. Perhaps she knew me for a discharged prisoner, and was fearing that I might commit a second offence."

He laughs bitterly at the conceit, and, having finished his job of mending, he puts away his needle, and busies himself in rolling up the net.

CHAPTER VI.

IT is really surprising how intimate people become in small communities, and how well they get to know each other. Had any one told Marcia, previous to her visit, that a fortnight's stay at Netherby would suffice to make her acquainted with half the inhabitants of the village, she would have considered the prediction too widely improbable for fulfillment; yet at the end of that time, she was on speaking terms with a majority of the towns-people, and was tolerably intimate with many of the dwellers in the vicinity of the Wilburt cottage.

This state of affairs had come about so naturally as to occasion neither astonishment nor comment. Captain Jack, who knew everything and everybody pertaining to Netherby, was more than willing that his young charge should share his knowledge; and it was mainly through his fatherly instruction that Marcia acquired a fund of local information which, if not valuable, was certainly extensive.

Among her numerous acquaintances, Tom Bagley came in for a large share of friend-

ship. From frequent visits to Mrs. Bagley's humble home, Marcia had grown to know and like the ex-convict, whose surliness was fast melting away beneath the magic of her sunny smile. With his sweetheart Susan, Hanson, Marcia was quite intimate; and it was the all-pervading desire of her heart that the estranged couple might speedily arrive at a fair understanding—such as had existed between them previous to Tom's imprisonment.

Captain Jack watched Marcia's course with evident approval. To see her associating with the fishermen's wives and daughters, was a bit of condescension that pleased him mightily. No fears had he that her friendliness toward her humble acquaintances would lead to disagreeable intimacies. "Bless the girl!" he would say. "Like a sound stick, she's fit to stand without support, and doesn't need to be set up with fashionable shrouds and backstays, like your two-cent aristocrats, who are as worthless as rotten spars."

Less pleased is the watchful skipper with Haldane's polite attentions. "Not that the man isn't well-behaved, and all that," he told his wife, confidentially. "But to see him hanging round the place reminds me of a shark in the wake of a ship; and more than once I've felt like sending a harpoon into him."

Good Mrs. Wilburt never failed to laugh at her husband's suspicions, and rebuke his vindictive spirit. To her way of thinking, Mr. Haldane was a perfectly well-bred gentleman, whose only object was to make himself agreeable, and add to the enjoyment of the friends with whom he was temporarily thrown in contact.

So far as it went, this analysis of Haldane's motives was entirely correct. He certainly was anxious to please the inmates of the cottage, and to this end he applied himself with an ardor which augured well for his success. Watchful and attentive, yet never obtrusive, he was shrewd enough to anticipate the wishes of the city guests, and sufficiently skillful to gratify their unexpressed desire, by suggesting occupations and amusements that could scarcely fail to make the time pass pleasantly. If, as was usually the case, Marcia received the lion's share of his good offices, the circumstance could not be expected to excite suspicion. It seemed perfectly natural that the youngest and most agreeable member of the company

should be singled out as an object of special regard, by an accomplished gallant like Haldane.

On her part, Marcia accepted the services of her new friend as freely as they were offered, and without stopping to question motives or weigh probabilities. If he showed her little ordinary courtesies, why should she not be civil in return? "Do as you're done by" was a good enough social maxim, she thought, and in accepting Haldane's invitations to ride, walk or row, she was not in the least embarrassed by an increase of attention and kindness, which, however slight, was easily recognizable, if not strikingly significant.

Her perfect freedom and easy self-possession served to baffle Haldane more completely than the most guarded behavior would have done. In their solitary rambles,—for the two were frequently alone together,—he was puzzled by his companion's cordiality and frankness, which might mean everything or nothing. At the end of the first week, he congratulated himself on having progressed rapidly in his love-making; yet three weeks later found him no nearer the accomplishment of his purpose, and he began to chafe at his slow advancement, and wonder when or by what means the end would be reached.

"Hang it," he exclaimed, as he sat in his room at the hotel, poring over his morning correspondence, "I am like a man hunted by hounds, yet forced to travel in a circle. Whether I go fast or slow, nothing comes of it except that, sooner or later, I arrive at my original point of departure, and hear the hungry pack yelling at my heels. Here's Artell," he continued, tapping one of the letters before him, impatiently, "the fellow gives tongue in a manner calculated to frighten a more resolute man than myself. If the rascal were paid good wages for making me miserable, he couldn't do his work more faithfully, or with greater apparent relish. He tells me that he can put off my creditors no longer—that I must do something immediately; as if I could marry the girl off-hand, and unlock her father's money chest at my leisure.

"And yet," he added, after a moment's thought; "the fellow is more than half right. Unless something is done speedily, I shall have to throw up my hand without playing a card. Perhaps I have failed to improve my opportunities, though the fact

is, I don't know that I have had any chances worth taking advantage of. Who can tell what the girl means by her stupid acquiescence and confounded candor? Does she see my drift? Has she fathomed my intentions and is she seeking to further them? Her conduct implies as much, yet such a thing is hardly probable. Well, whichever way her inclinations may lead her, matters have got to be definitely settled between us, and to-day is as good a time as any for ending the business.

Having reached this conclusion, Haldane proceeded to answer Artell's letter, informing that worthy, that their mutual plans were working favorably, and that the business which had brought him to Netherby, would in all likelihood be satisfactorily settled in less than twenty-four hours. This done, he strolled out into the street, posted his letter and returned to the hotel, where he played billiards until noon. After dinner, he smoked a cigar in leisurely fashion, and, after bestowing more than ordinary attention upon his dress, he set out for the Wilburt cottage, humming gaily as he went.

CHAPTER VII.

BYOND the fact that he was determined to press his suit at the earliest possible opportunity, Haldane had formed no decided plan of action. He had simply resolved to advance at all hazards, leaving his future movements to be governed by circumstances. On coming in sight of the cottage, one of the first objects that met his eye was the figure of Marcia, seated on a rustic settee which always stood on the low piazza. At the sight of his intended victim, he unconsciously quickened his pace, while his features assumed a resolute expression which was entirely foreign to their usual look of calm indifference.

When he reached the gate, Marcia laid aside the fancy work upon which she had been engaged, and arose, saying:—

"O Mr. Haldane! I was just wishing to see you as you came in sight. I have been coaxing Aunt Dorkey to go with me out on the Cape, but she dreads the fatigue. Now you are always ready for a ramble, and I know you won't refuse to accompany me when I tell you I have set my heart on going."

Haldane instantly expressed his delight at

the proposed stroll, and Marcia flew into the house to prepare for the walk.

In his present bellicose state, Haldane would have preferred meeting with a less friendly reception. All the morning he had been nerving himself for the encounter, and now, just as he was ready to begin action, he was rather disappointed than otherwise to see the enemy melting into air.

"Confound the girl," he muttered, as he thrust his hands deep into his pockets, "she seems to take everything as a matter of course. If she realized for a moment the new experience into which this walk is likely to lead her, she would be in no great hurry to undertake it, I fancy."

His soliloquy was interrupted by the appearance of Marcia, who emerged from the cottage clad in a dainty walking costume, and wearing a wide-brimmed gypsy hat, which set off her features to the best possible advantage. She was in unusually high spirits, and during the walk kept up a brisk talking, to the great relief of Haldane, who was in no mood for sustaining his part of the conversation.

The Cape, toward which their footsteps tended, was a bold headland situated about a mile from Captain Jack's abode. Upon the strip of beach which skirted its base the government had erected a small wooden building, in which was stored a fine boat, and other life-saving apparatus. No crew was attached to the station, it being thought that in cases of emergency enough fishermen would volunteer to man the life-boat. Thus far no opportunity had occurred for testing their willingness, and Captain Jack, who had charge of the building and its contents, had never been obliged to call for assistance.

Upon reaching the Cape Haldane rolled a bit of log to the verge of the cliff, and Marcia, availing herself of the improvised seat, proceeded to count the sails in sight.

"Thirteen," she said, when she had finished the reckoning. "Isn't thirteen an unlucky number?"

"I hope not," replied Haldane, as he seated himself beside the fair calculator.

He spoke with such earnestness that Marcia, who had remarked his changed behavior during the walk, turned a questioning glance upon him, and said:—

"You surely do not believe in omens?"

"I don't know but I do," Haldane answered, plucking nervously at the short,

brown grass. "The fact is," he went on, "I am about to broach a very delicate subject, and I naturally hate to have my attempt forestalled by anything that savors of ill luck or misfortune."

"If present circumstances seem unfavorable, you can at least wait for a fairer opportunity."

"No," said Haldane, with an air of dogged resolution; "however the affair may end, what I intend to say had best be said at once. As the matter is one that concerns us both, I must beg your attention until I have finished."

"I am a good listener," said Marcia; "go on." She tipped her broad-brimmed hat over her forehead, and with half-shut eyes, waited for her companion to proceed.

"When a man is in love," began the schemer; "he is apt to look over and beyond such obstacles as may stand between him and the object of his affections. Wealth, social position, or any other accident of fortune or birth that may effectually prevent him from winning the prize, will certainly offer no impediment to his desires, nor hinder him from honestly avowing them. Unless you comprehend this fact, you will scarcely appreciate my position, or believe in my sincerity."

"Mr. Haldane," interrupted Marcia, her cheeks fairly ablaze, "it may save us both much embarrassment if I tell you that I understand you perfectly. Young as I am, I have already learned that the flight of love is not bounded by social distinctions. You will believe me when I say that I have already accepted, in direct opposition to the wishes of my father, one whose present worldly position is considered above my own. A knowledge of this fact will convince you that it is useless to pursue this subject farther."

Haldane stared at the speaker in amazement. In all his wild dreams of marrying the heiress, it had never occurred to him that she might be the victim of a previous attachment; neither had he reckoned on the strength of will and womanly character that lay behind those fair, soft, girlish features. It needed but a glance at her countenance to assure him that he would gain nothing by persisting in his love-making, so he prepared to submit to the inevitable with the best possible grace, and endeavored to conceal his chagrin by enticing from Marcia the secret of her love affair.

His task was by no means a difficult one. Now that the subject was broached, Marcia, who had been accustomed to regard Haldane as a friend of her father, did not hesitate to put him in possession of the principal facts connected with her engagement. She told about meeting Walter Conroy at the White Springs, described her father's opposition to their engagement, and waxed indignant over the banishment of her lover, whose exile, she declared, had thus far only served to strengthen her attachment.

"And did you think me ignorant of all this?" asked Haldane, when Marcia had finished her story. Without waiting for a reply, he continued: "Did you imagine that I, who am Walter Conroy's most intimate and trusted friend, was about to make a declaration on my own account, instead of pleading the cause of your despairing lover, whose unworthy representative I am?" The question was asked with an air of mingled sincerity and amusement, as though the matter were too absurd for comment.

To say that Marcia was puzzled by Haldane's manner is to convey but a faint idea of her perplexity. "I may have mistaken your meaning," she said, "but unless you explain, I hardly see how I am to understand you."

"The fact is, my regard for Walter Conroy and yourself has led me into a false position," said Haldane, who was beginning to see his way clearly. "The other day," he went on, "Walter wrote me from New York"—

"But he isn't in New York," interrupted Marcia.

"I beg your pardon, Miss Marcia, Walter arrived in New York three days ago, from Europe. Here is his letter—no, confound it, I've left it at the hotel; but no matter. Upon his return he learned that you were in Netherby, and that I was stopping at the same place. Knowing my intimacy with your father, and that I was also aware of the difficulties which had attended his own love-making, Walter dropped me a line, begging me to arrange it so he could meet you at such a time and place as you might be pleased to appoint. This was what I was trying to do when you thought me engaged in pleading my own cause. Considering the different stations which we occupy in society—to say nothing of our disparity in years—I must say that I feel highly flattered by your suspicions."

Marcia's cheeks were crimson as she said, "Pardon me, Mr. Haldane; if I have blundered it is owing to my natural stupidity, and not from any desire to annoy or offend you. As for Walter, if he has been three days in New York, and has really wished to see me, I fail to understand why he could not have written to me, instead of you."

"Could you read his letter, which, unfortunately, I forgot to bring with me, you would make no mystery of what is really a very simple matter. Walter explains that he feared your correspondence might be subjected to certain restrictions. Then, too, he did not know your precise address, while he was able to obtain mine from my agent in the city. He knew I was aware of everything relating to his attachment, and he merely showed his confidence in me by appointing me to arrange the preliminaries of a meeting between you two."

"I would not—indeed, I *could* not meet Walter unless my father consented to the arrangement," said Marcia, emphatically.

Haldane looked grave at this declaration. "If you mean that you will not see Walter until your father gives you permission in so many words, then, I am sure, you will never meet your lover on earth. But if you can only bring yourself to act contrary to your father's expressed command, I know that he will secretly rejoice at, and openly forgive your disobedience. Your father is a stubborn man. Having forbidden your intimacy with Walter Conroy, he will abide by his decision, even though it be against his own inclination to do so. He has hinted to me that if he had not at first rashly opposed your marriage with Walter, he would, in view of your unhappiness and his own regret, cheerfully consent to the match. Hinted, do I say? why, he has actually told me as much. In fact, I have every reason to believe he has sent for Walter in the faint hope that you two might be brought to disregard his own foolish orders, and afford him an opportunity of bestowing a father's blessing upon a certain true-hearted couple who were not made to be separated. Now, isn't your duty perfectly clear? In the face of what I have told you, can you still insist upon your father's humbling himself to the extent of eating his own words? I can hardly believe that you will prove so untractable as to thwart your father's secret wish, or act in opposition to the promptings of your own heart."

CHAPTER VIII.

It would be hard to describe the mingled feelings of wonder and delight with which Marcia listened to Haldane's lengthy harangue. "Am I to understand that father would be glad to have me meet Walter?" she asked, in a tone of pleased uncertainty.

Haldane smiled confidently. "You are to understand that if it wasn't for your father's confounded obstinacy he would request you to meet your lover at the earliest opportunity."

"Well, then," said Marcia, "if father is willing, there is no reason in the world why I may not go to New York and see Walter at once."

But to this proposition Haldane strongly objected. "I have told you," he said, "that your father would be secretly pleased to see you and Walter reconciled and happy. His pride, however, will not allow him to sanction a proceeding which he condemned at the onset. If you really care to see your lover, or if you have the slightest desire to make your father happy in spite of himself, you will use the utmost caution, as a premature exposure of your plans will be sure to defeat your purpose."

All this, and much more to the same purport, Haldane poured into the ear of his perplexed listener. Though at first strongly opposed to a clandestine meeting, Marcia finally agreed that Haldane should invite Walter to visit Netherby, and that she should see the latter at such a time and place as their mutual friend might appoint. No one, not even Captain Jack, was to be let into the secret, lest the story should reach her father, and cause that stubborn gentleman to bring the affair to an untimely conclusion.

Many were the plans laid by Marcia and her escort, as the two walked slowly back to the cottage. Haldane's reserve had entirely disappeared, and he entered into the scheme with such apparent zest, and drew so pleasing a picture of the happy results which would be sure to crown their harmless stratagem, that Marcia, somewhat against her better judgment, was led to consider the proposed exploit one of the most delightful adventures imaginable.

At the gate Haldane lingered a while, urging upon Marcia the importance of keeping the affair strictly secret. Feeling confident that she could be trusted to keep her word, he at last bade his companion goodbye, and set out at a brisk pace for the hotel.

AT the telegraph office at Netherby, Haldane stopped for a moment to write a brief message addressed to William Artell. The telegram was as follows:—

"Meet me to-night at the Plainville hotel. Business urgent. HALDANE."

Having dispatched the above, the writer proceeded to the livery stable, where he ordered a horse and light buggy for an evening drive to Plainville, a dozen miles away. Reaching the latter place in time for a late supper, he ordered a room at the hotel, where, with a handful of cigars for company, he sat down to await the arrival of his accomplice.

It was late at night when the New York express drew up at the Plainville station. To Haldane, waiting impatiently in his room across the way, the time seemed unaccountably long between the arrival of the train and the appearance of his friend. However, just as he was beginning to despair of seeing the latter that night, a servant tapped at his door, with the welcome intelligence that a gentleman wished to see him.

"Show him in," said Haldane.

The words had scarcely left his lips, when the door was pushed softly open, and Mr. Artell entered the room.

The new comer was a middle-aged man, under-sized, round-shouldered, and not particularly good-looking. The removal of his hat displayed a high narrow forehead, crowned with a thin head of hair. His features were sharp cut, the mouth slightly sunken, the lips thin and bloodless. His light gray eyes had a keen, cold lustre, though they were seldom fixed upon an object long enough for an observer to determine their actual expression. He wore a long black frock coat that was buttoned to the chin. The garment was luminous with much friction, and a tall hat, carried in its owner's hand, looked as if it had been soaped. Such is a brief description of Mr. Artell as he glided silently into the room, and, closing the door noiselessly behind him, stood waiting for Haldane to speak.

"Well," said the latter, staring at his visitor with eyes in which the effects of his evening's potations were plainly visible; "so you're here at last?"

"Yes," assented Artell in a conciliatory tone; "I've come to 'greet the bride,' as a Scotchman would say."

"If that's your errand, I'll tell you at once and in plain English, that you'll 'greet' no bride of mine," said Haldane, crossly.

"Haven't you married the girl?" asked Artell.

"No, you fool," was the savage reply.

Artell gazed stupidly at the speaker. "Then, by Jove, the game is up!" he said, with a sigh of resignation.

"On the contrary," said Haldane, coolly, "it isn't fairly begun. Don't stare at me in that fashion, man! Sit down; and when you've heard what has happened to-day, you'll better understand what is likely to come to pass to-morrow. I wrote you, this morning, that my business in Netherby would in all likelihood be satisfactorily settled within twenty-four hours. Well, at that time I honestly believed it would be. After writing that letter, I accompanied Miss Thornton on a walk. The opportunity was all that could be desired, and I improved it so far as to begin a declaration. Without waiting for me to finish, she stopped me with the intelligence that she was already engaged to one Walter Conroy."

"Well, I'm blessed!" ejaculated Artell.

"I took my cue at once," continued Haldane. "Thanks to the timely interruption, I had not committed myself, and, consequently, was able to finish my story without compromising my dignity or annoying my companion. I pretended to know all about her affair with Conroy. I told her I was an intimate friend of her lover, and that he had commissioned me to arrange for her to meet him in Netherby. In short, I spent the best part of the afternoon in entertaining the young lady with a concoction of falsehoods which, in view of their hasty invention, I consider highly creditable to my imaginative powers."

"And the girl believed your lies," said Artell.

"Every word of them. When I left her at sunset, it was with the understanding that I should invite her lover to Netherby, and that she would meet him at such a trysting place as I might select.

"You must have had a purpose in all this?" said Artell, questioningly.

"I should say so," was the laconic rejoinder.

For a moment neither of the men spoke. Then Artell broke the silence by remarking: "You know, Haldane, as well as I do, how your affairs stand in the city—bills unpaid,

notes over-due, creditors clamorous, and nothing to satisfy their demands. By Jove! My late experience in dodging duns is enough to make a man sick of the sight of a bill, even though it be an acknowledgment in his own favor. But you've had your share of that sort of business; you can imagine what I've been through."

"Go on," said Haldane, as the speaker paused.

"Well," continued Artell, "I've nothing more to say, except that you've played the game and lost your stake. Your credit is ruined, your marriage with the heiress is impossible, and your only chance for safety lies in getting back to England where a lucky turn of fortune's wheel may bring you once more to the front."

"Have you finished your instructions?" asked Haldane, with mock politeness.

"I've told you the truth, if that's what you mean," was the dogged reply.

Haldane smiled grimly. "You have told but half the truth," he said, drawing his chair nearer his unwilling listener, and speaking in a voice that was little louder than a whisper. "You say my credit is ruined. Well, as far as that goes, I agree with you. You say my marriage with the heiress is impossible, and in that, too, I believe your judgment is correct. I am willing to admit whatever is admissible, but when you tell me the game is played, I answer that it is scarcely begun. When you cry out that my stake is lost, I contend that I shall hold the winning hand."

"From your talk, one would fancy that everything had worked out in our favor," was Artell's comment.

"And so it has," was the instant rejoinder. "Why, man, suppose I had won the girl and had married her off-hand! What then would have been our condition? I can describe it in a few words. As for myself, I should have been that most miserable of beings, a penniless adventurer, wedded to an heiress; doomed to subsist upon the bounty of a father-in-law, who would grudge me a bare living, forced to submit to every whim and caprice of my lady, under penalty of having my allowance of pocket money stopped. But now the case is different. I am still my own master, and before many days I shall be master of the situation as well. Once let me get control of that girl,—as I am bound to do,—once let me get safe possession of her, and I will have her father

offering to ransom her at any price I may name. Ten thousand dollars will be the lowest figure he can think of offering. Ten thousand, do I say? Twenty, forty, a hundred thousand! Aye, or his whole fortune; for I am sure John Thornton would part with his last penny to save his daughter from a life of sorrow or shame."

"Good Lord, man; speak lower!" interrupted Artell in a frightened whisper. "Do you want to give away the whole business?"

"Not if I can help it," replied Haldane. Then he added, with due caution. "Perhaps I am over sanguine, but such a scheme as this is enough to encourage a person less hopeful than myself. It's a big thing you've stepped into, partner."

Artell's little gray eyes twinkled craftily as he answered: "I don't know that I am in it as yet, and you'll excuse my saying that if the arrangement is what I suspect it to be, I'll have nothing to do with it."

"See here, Artell," said Haldane rising and confronting his tool, "I don't wish to quarrel, but unless you drop your confounded caution and enter into my plans with some show of spirit, I'll make you repent your cowardice, as sure as you're a living man. You and I have floated a long way on the same plank, and if one of us sinks, his companion is going with him to the bottom. I am not going to argue the case; I am just going to give you a few instructions, knowing that in spite of your reluctance, you will be sensible enough to follow them to the letter."

"You can give as many orders as you please, and I'll obey them or not, just as I choose," said Artell, doggedly.

"You'll obey them every one, if you know what's good for yourself," retorted Haldane. "But," he added, "there's no time for threats. I must tell you my plans, and assign you a part in the performance. You know that the girl has agreed to meet her lover, and that it is left with me to arrange the preliminaries. Now, my idea is this: on such an evening as may be convenient for us all, I will call for the young lady on the pretext of taking her to the trysting place. I will have a carriage in readiness, and will drive her four miles down the coast to Broad Beach, where you will be in waiting with a fast-sailing yacht. Embarking, we will steer for New York, timing our arrival so as to board an outward-bound English steamer

just as it is on the point of sailing. You will see to it that state-rooms are engaged in advance, so that all we need do is to step on board and take possession of them. Once in London, our task will be easy enough. From that time out, I shall leave the management of affairs in the hands of certain parties who are well used to conducting all manner of delicate negotiations. It will be their business to correspond with John Thornton, letting him know that his daughter is perfectly safe, and hinting that she will be restored to him for a comparatively trifling consideration. When the ransom is paid, the fair captive will be put on board a returning steamer and sent back to New York, where her father will receive her with open arms. There, now! Isn't the undertaking perfectly feasible, and won't we be more simple than idiots if we fail to improve this golden opportunity?"

Artell, who had listened with amazement to Haldane's explanation, smiled dubiously as he replied: "Your plan is excellent, but like all schemes for suddenly acquiring wealth, it needs to succeed in order to be wholly successful."

"And what is to prevent its succeeding?" asked Haldane, hotly. "Don't answer me in riddles; let me hear sound objections or nothing."

"You speak of my buying tickets for Europe, and of my chartering a yacht," said Artell. "I should like to know where the money is coming from,"

"Sell my office outfit. It cost five hundred dollars, and you can get three hundred dollars for it from any dealer in second-hand furniture. Besides, I have nearly four hundred dollars in my pocket this moment. But go on; raise up another bugbear; I want to see how far a coward's imagination will carry him."

Ignoring the taunt, Artell continued: "With the means at my disposal, I can easily engage a small vessel and crew, and I presume you will find no difficulty in bringing the girl to Broad Beach; but right here, it strikes me, we are going to encounter our chief obstacle."

"Out with it, man!" exclaimed Haldane, as the speaker paused. "You can't frighten me with your croaking; so come to the worst, and have done with it."

"You speak of the girl," Artell continued, "as if she were a bale of goods. According to your reckoning, we are going to

take her to London and send her back to New York regardless of her own inclinations in the matter. Suppose she objects to the voyage—as she certainly will, how can we compel her to make it? In a large steamer crowded with passengers, how shall we manage to carry our prisoner across against her wishes? Why, the captain will release our bird and have us both in irons before the ship leaves the dock; if, indeed, he allows us to come on board.”

“I have thought of all that, and I believe I see a way through the difficulty,” was the cool rejoinder. “We will avoid interference from the captain, by engaging a passage in the *Asia*. Her commander smuggles goods enough every voyage to cost him his position. He knows that I am aware of his crime, and that I can have him turned out of the ship, and perhaps imprisoned, whenever I care to enter a complaint against him. I don’t want him to know that I am running away with John Thornton’s daughter, but you may give him to understand that I am eloping with a young lady who freely consents to the arrangement, and that I count on his aid in keeping the affair quiet. Just let him know this much, and you’ll find the captain of the *Asia* ready to assist us in every possible way. As for the passengers, of course the girl will be drugged before she is carried on board, and you know as well as I do that it’s a matter of every-day occurrence for invalid voyagers to be helped over the side, and assisted below. Once in her room, our victim won’t quit it until she arrives in London, and then, not before the ship is cleared, and everything is ready for departure. I shall have quiet lodgings secured, and friends on hand to meet me at the dock. Beyond this, I can form no plans at present. There may possibly be a hundred awkward circumstances that I cannot foresee or guard against, but I believe I have provided for most contingencies that are likely to arise.”

“Suppose the thing succeeds, and the girl is ransomed at a price sufficient to pay us for our trouble and risk; what part of the prize am I to claim?” asked Artell.

Haldane met the eager gaze of his confederate with a look of uncompromising integrity.

“There’ll be the cost of the voyage, our expenses in England, the services of assis-

tants, and a few other items to be deducted from the sum. After that, whatever is left will be clear profit, and we will share it equally,” he said.

“And if we fail?” pursued Artell.

Haldane shrugged his shoulders significantly as he answered: “In that case, each must shirk for himself.”

“I don’t say your plan is impossible,” Artell continued, “but you’ll excuse my remarking that it seems rather a desperate undertaking for these enlightened times, and in this wide-awake country. Now, if we were in Italy”——

“In Italy!” ejaculated Haldane, impatiently: “why, man, in that country, on the high road between Fratta and Gubbio, I’ve seen half a dozen ragged rascals snatch an old dowager out of her traveling carriage in broad daylight, whisk her away into the mountains, and there keep her till her relatives were glad to purchase her freedom at the cost of her entire estate. The Italian brigand is a cowardly cur, but when he begins a job he does it without stopping to count the cost or weigh probabilities. What is possible in Italy is possible in America; and, so far as our present scheme is concerned, the idea has got to be carried out.”

“I’m with you!” Artell exclaimed; and he extended his hand impulsively, as if carried away by the other’s enthusiasm.

The two men shook hands in silence, after which ceremony they proceeded to arrange in detail the plan whose outline has already been given. The day was breaking when they finished their conference.

“You’ll take the first train to the city, and begin operations at once,” Haldane said, as he followed his visitor to the door.

The latter nodded.

“We must strike while the iron’s hot,” continued the speaker. “The girl is eager to meet her lover, and we must see that the opportunity is given her before she has time to change her mind.”

“I understand perfectly,” said Artell.

“Then good-by.” Haldane opened the door, and his companion glided noiselessly from the room. Left alone, he filled his glass and drained it. Then without undressing, he threw himself on the bed, and almost instantly fell asleep.

[To be continued.]

TO A YOUNG POET.

BY C. M. LAUSTMANN.

GRANT, Time, while the magic spell is o'er him
That the gentlest spirits touch his strings,
Till the haunted years in the mist before him
Float to the past on peaceful wings.

Grant that the thoughts he clothes so brightly
In robes his busy fancy weaves
Be fresh and pure as winds that lightly
Breathe dreamland songs through summer leaves.

RICHMOND, KY., 1888.

Grant that in music round him ringing
The lute low winds and murmuring streams
With mingling songs be softly singing
The spirit anthems of his dreams.

Grant his to-day, to-morrow, ever
Be bright with suns that cloudless set;
The quiet of his noondays never
Be haunted by the ghost, Regret.

LITTLE MART.

BY WM. PERRY BROWN.

AMONG the Red Knobs of the Tennessee Valley, the people are mostly of the poorer class of small farmers. Along the railroad a "Red Knobber" is known by the purple hue of his boots, usually well-stained by the hematitic dust of his patrimonial acres. Lying at the foot of the Chilhowee Mountains, the rocky fastnesses behind them were long the congenial sphere of the Moonshiner's hidden toil and trouble.

Little Mart Dodson had peddled "wild-cat whiskey" from the time he became able to take a three-gallon keg along the country roads after dark. He had been arrested, bound over before commissioners, tried, released or convicted so many times that the varied phases of Federal justice or leniency had long lost the spice of novelty, under a monotonous conviction of their tyranny and general futility as related to moonshining in general, and Little Mart in particular.

But one summer there came a lady and her daughter from Chattanooga to board at Hawk Cliff, a ragged spur of the Chilhowees, where a mineral spring or two bubbled out from beneath the precipices.

Mrs. Baird needed some pure whiskey for medicinal purposes. Following the instructions of the "Widder Green," with whom they boarded, Agnes, the daughter of the former, left a bottle and some money one night in a cleft of a large rock, called the "Devil's Anvil." On going back the next morning,

she found the money gone, and the bottle filled with "mount'in dew."

"Little Mart air al'ays up ter time," said the Widow Green. "He gits to that thar rock every Chuesd'y night, es reg'lar es clock-wuk."

There was no society in a social sense at Hawk Cliff, and Agnes, a lively girl not yet out of her teens, when not reading to or waiting upon her mother, found herself at some loss to pass the time. There was no one to dress for or flirt with, and the country folk, ever suspicious of social superiority, were shy and evasive. She sought solace in long rambles over the mountains, and though warned against the danger of getting lost, ventured further and further with feminine perversity, until one day she found herself in that unenviable predicament.

A thunder cloud had veiled the sun, the blue sky was vanishing, and the very depths of the mountain seemed to moan softly, as though the earth were feverish and in dread. Agnes stood at the juncture of several winding ravines, all equally wild and misleading, with great forest trees frowning over her, and without a definite idea as to her proper course.

"Wal, mis, air ye sure 'nuff lost, or what air the matter?"

The sound of any human voice was welcome in that solitude. Turning, she saw before her a short, stout, freckle-faced young man, having a sack swung over his shoulder

with a keg in each end of it. In a few hurried words she explained who she was and that she was lost.

"Yo're a good three mile from the Widder Green's," he said, "'n' I was a-goin' the yuther way."

Agnes instantly suggested a pecuniary inducement as a reason for guiding her home, but the young fellow looked at the clouds and said, hurriedly:—

"You jest wait hyur a minute."

Then, he disappeared round a huge bowlder before Agnes could remonstrate. In two minutes he reappeared, minus his sack and kegs, with the remark:—

"Now, miss, we mus' hurry ter git ter the Hangin' Rock afore that shower wets us."

They plunged into a wild gorge—the very one Agnes would not have taken if left to herself—and soon came upon a trail that wound here and there among the ridges, over rocks, through shadowy laurel brakes, and across several small brooks. The rain approached, and her guide kept increasing his speed until Agnes, panting and stumbling, was about to ask him to go slower. But at this juncture a sudden turn round a beetling crag brought them out on a rocky platform, fronting the valley lying along the foot of the mountain.

Overhead the cliffs projected, so that they were sheltered from the drops already falling. The young man brought her a drink from a spring near by, and she sat down to survey in security the solid wall of gray rain now sweeping over the distant knobs and up the intervening valley.

"I don't believe I know your name," she remarked, as he stood awkwardly gazing at her as upon a new revelation in the line of feminine loveliness.

"I'm little Mart," he replied.

"Oh, to be sure; you are the person who put the whiskey in mamma's bottle."

"Wal now, miss, I'd be a purty fool ter own up ter sech es that," he returned with, however, a very knowing look.

"I suppose you are afraid of detection; yet you need not fear me. But don't you ever wish you were in some nicer business? Have you ever thought of the trouble whiskey brings upon people?"

Mart could not say that he had, yet for the first time he felt a vague shame of his occupation, but said:—

"Pore folks has ter make money somehow 'thout stealin' it."

"Yes, but I would rather make it any other way than by breaking the laws to sell people that which injures them."

Somehow Mart felt that the usual arguments in favor of moonshining would not have much effect on this refined, delicate girl, whose presence now beamed upon him almost like some angelic presence from another world.

Still they chatted on, he with a growing sense of discomfort and inferiority, and yet withal strangely fascinated. He was ignorant and superficially coarse, yet he knew that at heart he desired to act right and be honest, only right and honesty had suddenly assumed a new and astounding phase in the light of her sweet presence and kindly remonstrances.

The rain at length ceased, and they soon arrived at the Widow Green's. Agnes, at the doorstep, offered him a silver dollar, saying she knew she had put him to a good deal of trouble. Silver dollars were tempting, but he declined taking it, saying:—

"I reck'n I kin erbleege people ef I am a moonshiner."

"Never mind," she said, with a reassuring smile, "you must take it just to please me. Perhaps it will help you a little in getting better employment."

The next day Little Mart returned for his sack and kegs, reflecting deeply. After getting them he went to the Hanging Rock, and there kindled a fire with chestnut bark on the very spot where Agnes had sat and talked to him. Then he placed the sack and empty kegs thereon, and grimly watched them burn to ashes. As at last he turned away, he muttered:—

"Me 'n' mother hev got to git our livin' some yuther way attar this."

That night his mother's little cabin in the Red Knobs was surrounded by four deputy marshals, and Little Mart marched off, a prisoner of the United States, to Athens. Two months later, after his release from jail, he came home, only to learn that Mrs. Baird and her daughter had returned to Chattanooga.

Little Mart felt disappointed. Though he realized the nature of the social gulf between them too well to hope to mingle much with people like the Bairds, yet he wished to see Agnes once more, and tell her how her kind words and sweet smile had made another man of him.

He secured work in the log camps in the

mountains, and a few weeks thereafter went down to Chattanooga on a large raft of logs. Having then an idle day on his hands, he thought he would venture to call on the Bairds.

He dressed himself in his best suit of homespun jeans, and soon found the house from the directions given him by the Widow Green. The imposing brick front and the aristocratic neatness of the surroundings rather daunted him, but he resolutely knocked on the door, regardless of the polished bell handle, and boldly asked of the trim colored housemaid, who at length came, if he might see Miss Agnes, explaining also that "She 'n' her mother knowd me in the mountains."

The servant surveyed him wonderingly, yet after a moment's hesitation bade him follow her, and at once ushered him into the parlor where Agnes and another young lady, with two or three fashionably-dressed young men, sat talking and laughing together.

Agnes had risen as the door opened. The contrast between her graceful, stylishly-garbed figure and Little Mart's awkward pose, ill-fitting clothes, and rusty brogans, as he stood clumsily holding his broad-brimmed wool hat, was, as one of the young men whispered to the other young lady, "Too utterly paralyzing."

Agnes recognized him instantly, and colored with the reverse of pleasurable sensations, as she said, carelessly:—

"Oh yes, you wish to see my father. He never transacts business at the house; you will find him at the office. Margaret," to the servant, "show this—gentleman to the door."

Then she coolly turned away, and before Little Mart fairly knew what he was about, he was walking down the street, with his thoughts in a whirl, and a dull pain at his heart. At the corner a gentleman stopped him.

"Why, you are Mart Dodson, are you not? This is fortunate, as you happen to be the very man I was wishing to see."

The speaker was the father of Agnes Baird, whom Mart had seen once or twice when Mrs. Baird and her daughter were at Hawks Cliff. Mr. Baird was largely interested in the new iron industries then developing throughout East Tennessee; and after dragging our half-reluctant hero into an office nearly as luxurious in its appointments as the parlor from which he had been

so unceremoniously dismissed, the former said to him:—

"Young man, you are in luck. Our mining experts have been investigating some of the iron deposits of the Red Knobs, particularly near Hawks Cliff, and they report some veins of unusual richness. The new railroad now projected from Cleveland to Tellico will render some land there valuable. You and your mother have eighty acres. I am prepared to buy you out for a lump sum, or give you five thousand dollars for a half interest."

Little Mart gazed at Mr. Baird, half stupefied with wonder. Yet amid the turmoil of his emotions came the thought that, if this were so, he would at last have the time and means to make a gentleman of himself, so that people would not want to turn him out of doors for looking like the clod he felt himself to be at present.

There was some further talk, when Little Mart took his leave, promising to go immediately home, see his mother, look around a little, and let Mr. Baird know. His native shrewdness did not altogether forsake him. If there was a fortune in their poor, worn-out farm, Little Mart determined that the Dodsons should have their share of it. He could then go off, get an education, see and mingle with the world, and if he ever returned, show Agnes that he was really worthy of her first friendly interest in him, and that when she ignored him at her own home, she had done her better self, as well as him, an injustice.

The new manager of the great Tellico Company was in his private office. A lady entered, and he looked up from his morning paper, then inquired briefly:—

"Well, ma'am, what can I do for you?"

The lady pushed aside her veil. The manager looked at her more closely, then rose and offered her a chair. He was short and stout, with a heavy red mustache, close clipped hair, and keen gray eyes.

"You have advertised for a type-writer," she said; "I should like to apply for the position."

The manager still gazed at her curiously, but he only asked:—

"How long have you worked at type-writing?"

"I have only just learned it at the commercial school," she replied, hesitatingly.

"School type-writing, like school teleg-

raphy, doesn't always answer so well without some actual business practice. However, perhaps we can get over that. But let me ask you a rather strange question. Do you remember getting lost once in the Chilhowee Mountains, and being brought home by a red-headed mountain boy, to whom you gave a silver dollar and some good advice as to his turning from the error of his moonshining ways?"

The lady's amazement brought a good-natured smile to the manager's face, as he continued, pointing to himself:—

"You see the boy has not forgotten, and he still retains his red hair and freckles."

She now colored vividly under another remembrance, as she said naively, yet with some embarrassment:—

"I also remember being, I fear, very rude to that same young man on another occasion, but I was young and—and foolish then."

"And he was quite a bucolic scarecrow, and should have had better sense than to intrude where he did, uninvited. I don't blame you, Miss Baird. I might have done the same thing myself under similar circumstances. Let that rest. You did me far more good than evil. The effect of your kind words, and the memory of your encouraging smile outlasted the influence of your after indifference. The desire to be some one, to make something of myself, implanted unconsciously by you, never left me. It was the turning point of my life. See; I have even kept the dollar you gave me for good luck."

He exhibited it with a smile, whereat she

again blushed slightly. Then continuing, he said:—

"Your father also made me the first monied offer for my mother's little farm, that has proved a veritable bonanza for me in more ways than one. I then resolved to try to make a man of myself, so that if I ever met you again you would not feel so ashamed of me."

"You have your revenge," she said, sadly. "Papa failed, and gradually worried himself into the grave. Mamma and I are quite poor now"—

"Don't explain," interrupted Little Mart, kindly. "I really feel that I owe to you far more than the giving of this position will ever repay. Your influence, unknown to yourself, sent me off to study, sharpened my wits, caused me to drive shrewd bargains, yet keep my hands clean, and persist until—well, until here I am."

It was difficult for Agnes Baird to realize that this alert, polite, well-dressed man—a partner and manager of a great iron industry, requiring large capital and hundreds of workmen—was the awkward youth she had carelessly befriended, then ignored, only a few years ago. Such was the case, however, and it only remains to say that she obtained the position, and that Little Mart—now Mr. Dodson to every one—remained such a good friend to her under these new relations that I would not be surprised to hear of another partnership being entered into by and by. A partnership, too, of the most endearing earthly nature, involving some change of name and other agreeable future possibilities.

OCTOBER.

THROUGH golden gates of leaves, through columns gray
Of elms and maples old whose bows enlace
In bright cathedral arches overhead,
Enwreathed with scarlet vines; through bosky tufts
Of underbrush, and willows still so green
Along the hidden brooks, they seem to hold
The summer snared, nor heed the threatening frost,
The calm October days pass one by one,
Smiling in rosy sunsets ere they flit
Forever from the earth. How silently
They march, timed to the cricket's ceaseless chirp,
Through the still noon, while tall flowers mark their path—
Blue succory, purple asters, goldenrod,
Wild yellow stars, and lovely cardinal flowers
Whose crimson petals light the sluggish streams.

AN ATLANTIC VOYAGE.

AS IT WAS AND AS IT IS.

WHEN Samuel Johnson said "A ship is a prison with a chance of being drowned," he in that aphorism gave expression to the opinion generally entertained by landsmen in his day. In fact, the discomforts, and even privations, which sea-traveling then involved were such that very few persons were willing to expose themselves to them, save when compelled by imperative circumstances to do so.

When I crossed the Atlantic in 1841, for the first time, the condition of things had, in the three-quarters of a century which had elapsed since Johnson's time, measureably improved; but the *desagremens* to which passengers were even then subjected were numerous. No regular steam communication between Great Britain and the United States was in existence. The *Sirius* and the *Great Western* had indeed crossed the ocean in 1838, and the latter vessel had continued her trips at irregular intervals. But for some little time subsequently, no other steamer attempted to follow her example, the *Cunard* line not having been established until 1842.

At the period of which I speak, the sailing packets which ran between London and New York, and between Liverpool and that port, were ships of five to six hundred tons burden. The staterooms—as the little cabins ranged on either side of the saloon were termed—were below the sea-level. They were incommodious, dark and ill-ventilated. In fact, the only light they enjoyed was that furnished by small pieces of ground glass inserted in the deck overhead, and from the fan-lights in the doors opening to the saloon, and this was so poor that the occupants of the staterooms could not even dress themselves without making use of a lamp. The sole ventilation of them was that afforded by the removal of the saloon skylights, which, of course, could only be done in fine weather. The consequence was that the closeness of the atmosphere in the staterooms was at all times most unpleasant; while the smell of the bilge-water was so offensive as to create nausea, independent of that arising from the motion of the vessel. In winter, on the other hand, the cold

was frequently severe. There was, it is true, a stove in the saloon, but the heat from it scarcely made itself appreciably felt in the side-cabins.

In other matters there was the same absence of provision for the comfort of the passengers. The fresh water required for drinking and cooking purposes was carried in casks; and when the ship had a full cargo, many of these were placed on deck, with the result that their contents were sometimes impregnated with salt water from the waves shipped in heavy weather. At all times the water was most unpalatable, it being muddy, and filled with various impurities from the old worm-eaten barrels in which it was kept. Not only was the water bad, but the supply occasionally proved inadequate; and when the voyage was an unusually long one the necessity would arise of placing the passengers upon short allowance.

There was always a cow on board; but there was no other milk to be had than what she supplied, no way of preserving it having been discovered. Canned fruit and vegetables were equally unknown. There was commonly a fair provision of mutton and pork, live sheep and pigs being carried; but of other fresh meat and of fish the stock was generally exhausted by the time the vessel had been a few days at sea, refrigerators at that period not having been invented.

But the arrangements on board these ships were defective in much more important matters than in not providing a good table for the passengers. The boats—even when they were seaworthy, which frequently was not the case—were so few in number that, in the event of shipwreck, there was no possibility of their holding more than a third of the souls on board. The longboat, indeed, was practically useless in an emergency, as it was almost invariably filled up with sheds for the accommodation of the cow, sheep, and pigs; and it would have been several hours' work to clear the boat and launch her.

The law did not then render it compulsory for every vessel crossing the Atlantic to carry a surgeon, and the owners of the various lines of American packets would not

incur the expense of providing one. The consequence was that, if an accident occurred, or there was serious illness on board, no medical assistance was available.

If the cabin passengers had good cause to complain that neither their safety nor their comfort was sufficiently studied, the condition of the steerage passengers was infinitely worse. Men, women and children were huddled like sheep in the quarters assigned them, no separation of the sexes being attempted. The berths, which ran on either side of the vessel, were not inclosed, and were without curtains. The women were compelled to dress and undress before the eyes of the male passengers, and exposed to their coarse remarks and scurrilous jests.

The steerage passengers were required to both supply and cook their own provisions. There was commonly a fierce struggle for a place at the galley fire, in which the sick and feeble necessarily went to the wall; and sometimes several days would pass without any warm food being obtained by those who were most in need of it. Again, when there was a storm, or even when the ship experienced heavy weather, the hatches were closed, rendering the atmosphere of the steerage almost stifling. In fact, the condition and treatment of this class of passengers were simply abominable, and such as to reflect deep discredit upon the government for allowing so many years to elapse ere any attempt was made to deal with the evil.

Now all is changed. The steamers which at the present day cross the Atlantic are vessels ranging from four to seven thousand tons burden; and the arrangements on board of them are excellent in all respects. Besides the lifeboats—which are numerous, large, and built on the most approved models—there are rafts which, in case of necessity, can be got ready and launched in a few minutes. In the event, too, of a fire breaking out in any part of the ship, the appliances for extinguishing it are of the most thorough order. In fact, the provision made for the safety of the passengers would be all that could be desired if every ship carried a sufficient number of boats to accommodate, in case of disaster, *every* passenger, even when her complement was full.

The comfort of the traveling public is now

carefully studied. The cabins for the first-class passengers are placed amidships, where the motion of the vessel is least felt, instead of, as formerly, at the stern. The state-rooms are commodious, handsomely furnished, thoroughly ventilated, and heated by steam. The saloon, which is spacious and well lighted, contains a piano, a small library, bagatelle tables, chess, etc., for the use of the passengers. There are also smoking and reading rooms and bathrooms, supplied with hot as well as cold water. The table is so luxuriantly spread that there is scarcely a delicacy which can be obtained in the best hotels found lacking on board these steamers. The supply of fresh water, furnished by condensers, is practically unlimited; while that which is required for drinking purposes is in summer cooled with ice, of which a large stock is provided. A surgeon is invariably carried, the law rendering it obligatory to do so; and his services are at the disposal of any of the passengers who need them, without the payment of any fee.

Nor have the steerage passengers failed to participate in the altered condition of things. Instead of their being crowded together in the badly ventilated and unhealthy quarters assigned to them, as was formerly the case, it is now compulsory for a fixed cubic space to be allotted to each individual. Not only, too, are the berths inclosed—which is greatly conducive to the preservation of decency—but the single women occupy a separate compartment, in the charge of a matron. But one of the greatest improvements which has taken place in the condition of occupants of the steerage has been effected, requiring cooked provisions to be found by the owners of the ship; and although the passage-money is necessarily higher than it was under the old system, this drawback is more than compensated by the comfort which results from the present arrangement.

In conclusion, I may say that, indulging in a retrospect upon my experience for the last forty years—during which period I have crossed the Atlantic ten times—I have been forcibly struck by the contrast the peril, tedium and inconveniences then attendant upon an Atlantic voyage afford, to the safety, rapidity, and comfort with which it is now accomplished.

TO A LADY.

BY E. G. W.

A GAIN I welcome the familiar pen;
Again I sit me down to think and write;
Fairly and freely should flow my fancies when
So fair a subject calls me to indite.
And thou, O Muse, whose gracious fingers oft,
And ne'er, I trust, in vain, have beckoned me,
Grant that thy spirit, breathing numbers soft,
May now descend to aid thy humblest votary.

So when the lark, in fullest tide of song,
Makes sudden pause amidst his music clear,
As seeking which, of all the thoughts that throng,
First to embody for the listening ear,
So do I hesitate and pause, in doubt
With such diversity where to begin;
For outward eyes would praise those charms without,
Whilst love would greet the soul enshrined those charms within.

Ah! gracious lady, words alone are vain
Thy finer, subtler traits to fitly show;
Rather Apollo's art, in sweetest strain,
With long-drawn symphonies, as soft, as low,
And cunningly devised by master-hand,

Thy worth and beauty better would express
Than my rude phrases, serving but to stand
As tokens of thy power and of my faithfulness.

Yet tokens true are they; as tender shoots
Just peeping through the earth are sureties good
That deep below are hidden strongest roots,
Which give this evidence of lustihood,
So doth the love, long 'prisoned in my breast,
Forced by its growth at length expression find.
I place my life, my all, at thy behest;
I could not love thee more, nor oaths could stronger bind.

Yet what are words? Mere breaths which pass away;
And words are at the service of us all.
Vows, true or false, ring all the same to-day;
We by our after actions stand or fall.
Give me to do some deed, some work, to show
And prove the love I bear thee; test my faith.
I speak no more; in silence love shall grow,
And silent witness give that love shall last till death.

THE MYSTERIOUS LIGHTS.

BY G. WILLCUTT.

IN the fall of 1860, I had occasion to visit that wild and picturesque country, known in the west as the "Ozark Region," "laying and being" in the southern part of Missouri, and the northern portion of Arkansas—in fact, forming the dividing line between those two states. At the time of which I write, "the region" was sparsely settled, and it was considered a good day's travel from one inn, or house of public entertainment, to another.

It was a cold, disagreeable day in the latter part of October, that I set out on horseback from the "Cross Keyes," a roadside inn, situated in the mountains, to go to a settlement distant some thirty miles. The road that I had followed, led through mountain passes, over hills, and across dark valleys covered with heavy growths of timber. In the summer, or early autumn, this route would have been delightful to the traveler who admires wild and romantic

scenery, but on the present occasion it was to me anything but delightful.

By the middle of the afternoon, I had got fairly out of the mountainous country, and entered upon a level tract of land covered by a dark forest of heavy timber. The clouds that had obscured the sun all day now began to thicken and look black and threatening. The wind, cold and piercing, whistled through the forest in a manner which I knew indicated a coming storm. I was not mistaken in my conjectures, for in a short time the rain began to fall in torrents. I was soon drenched by the falling water. Judging by the distance I had come, and the appearance of the country, I knew that I was not far from the settlement, and I determined to push forward as fast as possible. For an hour or more, I rode on at a brisk trot. It was now nearly dark, yet the storm continued to rage in all its wild fury. The driving rain and sleet almost

blinded me and my horse as we pushed forward in the fast gathering gloom. I endeavored to discover, if possible, some sign of the settlement or some human habitation where I might obtain shelter for the night. Whenever I raised my head to discover my whereabouts, my eyes invariably received such a discharge of sleet and water, that I was compelled to lower it again to ward off the damaging effects of the storm. Thus my powers of vision were confined to the limited space occupied by my horse's neck and pommel of my saddle. Even these objects soon became dim and indistinct in the blackness of the coming night. Dropping the reins, I entrusted myself and safety to the instinct of my sagacious horse, knowing full well, that if there were a farmhouse within reach he would discover it, and lead me to it accordingly. In ten minutes, after giving him the reins, he stopped suddenly in the road and began snuffing the air, then struck off at right angles from the main road, and entered the timber and underbrush on my right. Holding out my arms in opposite directions, I discovered that I was in a narrow path that led I knew not where, but as I had entrusted my safety to the care of my horse, I determined to allow him to have his own way. For nearly a quarter of an hour I rode on in a brisk trot over this gloomy unknown road, each moment expecting to see or hear some sign that would lead me to some shelter, but I was aware of nothing, save the continued splash—splash of my horse's feet in the mud and water on the ground, and an occasional spark of fire, struck from a flint by one of his shoes.

At the end of fifteen minutes, I came to an opening, of not more than two hundred yards in circumference; in the centre of this, stood a dark object, which I immediately recognized as a house.

Seeing no lights, and judging from the lateness of the hour that the inmates were all abed, I dismounted; fastening the bridle rein to the fence, I advanced to the door and made the usual signal for admittance, but received no reply. I rapped as loud as I could with the butt of my riding whip, but still no answer; I then began to kick the door with my foot, calling aloud, at the same time, for admittance. In a short time a husky voice, on the inside, demanded my name and business.

"Jones," said I, giving the first name I could think of. "I am a belated traveler,

and desire food and a night's lodging for myself and horse."

"You are not a ghost, then, are you?" continued the voice.

"Not by a good deal, my kind sir; but can't say how soon I shall be one, if you don't let me in out of this storm, and give me something to eat," I said, in half smiling wonder at the singular question of the insider.

"Then wait a moment, and I will let you in."

"The 'moment' was occupied by the man in removing bolts and bars from the door; then it swung open and I entered. Before me stood a man with a haggard face and disheveled hair, with a gun raised to his shoulder pointing directly at me; in a corner crouched a woman, her face pale as death, and who looked as though she were frightened out of her wits.

"Put down your gun, my good man. I am neither ghost nor hobgoblin, but of real flesh and blood like yourself."

This appeared to satisfy him in a manner, and putting the gun in the corner, he advanced very cautiously to where I stood, and began feeling my arms and examining my person. When he had done, he said, in a pleasanter voice:—

"I believe you; you may sit down there by the fire and dry your clothes."

"No; I must see that my horse is sheltered before I can take any rest myself.

"Then bring him around into the yard, you will find food and shelter for him at the back of the house."

I did as directed, wondering all the time in my mind, what could be the matter within the house. After seeing that my animal was properly cared for, I again entered the cabin. The woman, by this time, was going about preparing my supper. I took a seat near the fire, where I had a full view of both host and hostess.

They were young, and according to my judgment, had not been married long. After examining their faces narrowly, and watching their movements for a short time, I concluded that my host and his wife were frightened, wonderfully frightened, at something, but what that something was, I was at that moment unable to determine. After I had finished my meal I was shown a small pallet on the floor, where I was told I could lie down to rest as soon as I felt so disposed. As I had been traveling all day and the

greater part of the night, I sorely felt the need of a few hours' sleep; so removing my coat and boots I stretched myself at full length on the pallet, and in a few moments was wrapt in profound slumber.

How long I slept I know not; but this I do know, that I was awakened by one of the loudest, wildest, and most unearthly screams that I ever heard. I sprang to my feet and gazed about the room. The man and woman were in the same position as I had first seen them that night; my first thought was that the man was about to take the life of his wife, with the weapon that he held in his hand, but as I advanced towards him, for the purpose of wringing it from his grasp, the same scream was again repeated; this time it came from the yard in front of the house. Going to the window, I lifted the curtain and looked forth. There I saw an object clothed in white, dancing about over the yard, now and then, throwing up its long white arms and uttering the same screams that had so startled me but a few moments previous. For five minutes, I stood and watched this ghostly apparition, as it performed its gyrations over the ground; at the end of that time it disappeared from my sight and did not visit the cabin again that night. Dropping the curtain I resumed my seat near the fire. Taking out my watch I found that it was just one o'clock.

"Come, my friend," said I; pointing to a chair at my side. "Come, sit down here and tell me what all this means."

The man advanced trembling, and mechanically took the chair that I had designated. For some moments he remained silent, then in a faltering voice, which plainly indicated the extent of his fright, he said:—

"Before I say anything in regard to those strange proceedings, I wish to show you another sight, which you have not seen;" saying which, he arose and began ascending a ladder, which led to the loft above. I arose and followed close at his heels. When we reached the upper apartment he approached a small window, which was made in the further end of the room; removing a dusty paper that was fastened over it, he told me to look out. I did so, and on an elevated piece of land, not distant more than a quarter of a mile, I saw *two lights*, one red, and the other white, and but a few feet distant from each other. Just beyond the lights

was an old log building which I recognized as a church. By the light reflected from its side I discovered that the opening, for several yards around the building, was used as a burying ground, and it was on two newly made graves that the lights were situated. They burned with a bright, steady blaze notwithstanding the wind was blowing a perfect gale during the time I was observing them from the window. As I was about replacing the paper over the window, a prolonged, dismal wail, as if uttered by some one suffering the most intense agony, was borne to my ears upon the advancing wind, then followed a succession of reports like the discharge of heavy artillery. The man shook with affright as these sounds fell upon his ears. I looked forth again, but could see nothing save the lights, the church and the graves. I must confess that I was frightened, although I claim to possess rather a philosophical turn of mind; yet, in this particular case, my philosophy failed me. Had the same thing occurred in some town or village graveyard, I should have thought nothing of it, for I could have attributed the cause to some person or persons endeavoring to frighten the inhabitants; but for such a thing to be seen and heard here, in this wild and sparsely settled region, was beyond my power to comprehend. I closed the window and followed my friend quickly down the ladder. Seating ourselves again by the fire, the man at my side said:—

"Myself and wife have been married just two years this fall, and have been living on this place about half that time. Previous to my moving here, this farm, which by the way is a very good one, belonged to my uncle, who resided in D— county. At his death he left his estate to his two nephews, myself and cousin. The substance of the will was this: two-thirds of the property should belong to the nephew who should reside on this farm for the space of four years. What reason my uncle had for so disposing of his estate, I am unable to say. As I was married at the time of my uncle's death, and my cousin was not, that relative proposed to me, that, if I would give him his portion in ready money, and take mine in real estate, that I might have the two-third part spoken of in the will. I accepted the proposition and moved here accordingly. My relative took the money and left the country, and I have not heard from him

since the day of his departure. My uncle, at his own request, was buried over there in that graveyard. In regard to the sights which you have seen here to-night, I know nothing of them whatever, save the very same things have been repeated each night, for the last week. I never was a believer in ghosts, nor anything of the kind, yet I am at a loss to know how to account for these strange nightly proceedings, and unless I can discover the cause in a short time I shall be compelled to leave my place, and thereby forfeit my claim to the two-third part."

Here he ceased speaking, and began replenishing the fire with fuel. At length, after a few moments' silence, thinking I had a clew to the mystery, I spoke:—

"Friend," said I, "I believe I can clear up this matter for you."

"Do it," he said, opening his eyes wide in expectation, "and half I possess is yours."

"I shall charge nothing for my services; only let me take your trusty rifle, and I promise you that before sunrise you shall have this thing satisfactorily explained."

"You don't intend to go alone, do you?"

"I think I can work to better advantage alone; besides, you had better stay to keep your wife company; she would not like to be left alone under the present circumstances."

"May heaven protect you, and bring you safely back."

After examining the gun and a revolver, which I carried, to see that they were in shooting order, I bade the man good-night, and left the cabin. The storm was still raging, but this only served to facilitate my progress; had it been light I should have had to proceed with more caution; as it was, I was guided by the lights and protected from the view by the darkness. The lights were as bright as when I first saw them, but the shrieks and reports came only at long intervals. Taking a circuitous route, so as to come up in the rear of the church, I strode briskly forward, protecting at the same time the tube of the gun from the rain with the skirts of my coat. After a half hour's work, with some trouble and great caution, I arrived safely in the rear of the church—then creeping noiselessly forward on my hands and knees, I reached the corner, peering around which, I saw the lights burning brilliantly on the two newly made graves; I drew my head back and waited further signs.

Five minutes passed, and I heard no noise of any kind; but at the end of that time, as I was about changing my post of observation to the next corner, I heard a footstep almost within reach of me. I lay perfectly quiet and the footsteps passed by into the lighted space beyond. It was a tall figure dressed in the habiliments of the grave, with blood-shot eyes and pallid face, evidently the same ghost that had but a short time previous visited the cabin, and disturbed my rest.

When it had got within a few feet of the lights it suddenly halted, and began making these horrid noises, which I have already described. Just at this point I raised the rifle to my cheek and fired, and as the clear report rang out on the midnight air, the ghost, the lights, the graves, and everything visible before me instantly disappeared from view, and left me surrounded by a wall of Egyptain-like darkness, with not a sound to break the stillness, save the melancholy sighing of the storm through the treetops over head, and the whistling of the wind around the corner of the church where I lay. My feelings, just at this moment, can better be imagined than described. I was not frightened, for the object calculated to frighten had disappeared; but I was astonished, bewildered, like one awaking from some strange dream. This last performance was something I had not expected, and I began to wish myself safely out of the bedeviled neighborhood. I arose to my feet, and was about to quit the premises, when my ear detected a low groan coming from the darkness on my right. I followed in the direction from which the sound came, and had not proceeded far, when the same figure I had twice before seen, sprang from the ground, and began running in the opposite direction. I followed in swift pursuit, and had the satisfaction of soon overtaking it, and making it my prisoner.

I then led the way back to the cabin, followed by my ghost prisoner, whose arms I had fastened with a small cord. We were met at the fence by the farmer and his wife, who had watched a part of my proceedings from the loft window, and who were now almost frantic with joy at my successful adventure. Having entered the cabin, I commenced examining my prisoner. Unwinding the sheet from about his body—for I knew it was a man by his voice—I discovered that instead of a "raw-head and bloody-bones," he was a genuine human being, and

of no small dimensions either. A few drops of turpentine and a rag, soon removed the coat of white paint from his face, and as I gave it the last stroke with the rag, my host threw up his arms in astonishment, and exclaimed:—

“Good God! it is my cousin!”

I was not at all surprised at this discovery, for he was the very person whom I had suspected from the first, to be at the bottom of this little mystery. When I had dressed the wound made in the fleshy part of the arm, where my shot had taken effect, I gave him a seat by the fire, where he sat down and acknowledged the whole thing, to his now enlightened but indignant relatives. He said that the lights and noises were made by combustible and explosive chemicals, so arranged that he could entinguish the one and suppress the other at his will; and that when I fired, he immediately put out the lights and stopped the noises, and

would have effectually evaded my search, had not the wound, made by the ball in his arm, pained him so severely that he was compelled to discover himself to me by his groans.

I will not give his whole story in detail, but merely the substance, which was about as follows: He said that after obtaining his portion of the estate he had traveled from one place to another, gaming, and keeping all sorts of company, until he had spent the last cent his uncle had left him. Recollecting that the condition of his deceased uncle's will was, “that his cousin should remain on the farm as a tenant for the space of four years, but in case he should leave it before that time had fully expired, the property would then fall to him, he had, therefore, made his way back to the neighborhood and adopted the means that we have already described, for routing his relative and taking possession of his property.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

IVY POISONING.

THE surest remedy is for those to whom the plant is poisonous to give it a wide berth. This is not always possible, for although this plant, which is very poisonous to some, but entirely harmless to others, generally grows in patches which completely cover the ground, a few single plants are often found scattered about the field, and before one is aware of its presence the mischief is done.

Ivy poisoning is produced by two species of plants. The poison ivy, *Rhus Toxicodendron*, as it is properly called, is not an ivy, but belongs to the sumach genus. Its leaves have a marked and very characteristic glossy look. It grows ivy-like on stone walls, fences and hedges, or climbs trees and bushes. It is found by roadsides, in pastures, and along the borders of woods.

The second species is popularly known as “poison dogwood,” poison sumach (*Rhus Venenata*). It is small tree, is found mostly in swamps, and is by far more poisonous than the poison ivy. In the autumn its foliage surpasses that of all other trees in the variety and brilliancy of its tints.

Actual contact with the plants is not, in all cases, necessary for the production of

their poisonous effects, on account of their active principle. Persons are known to have been poisoned by simply passing by places where the vine grows abundantly.

Those who are not familiar with these plants will, on general principles, do well to avoid any vine or bush growing by rocks, fences and woodsides, with glossy leaves arranged in threes; and in the autumn, any particularly brilliant tree in swampy places, with leaves resembling, but broader than those of the common sumach.

Fortunately ivy poisoning is not a dangerous affection, although persons severely poisoned present a very distressing and dangerous appearance. No scars or permanent injury to the skin or general system are apprehended in ordinary cases, and no danger “of catching it” by contact need be feared.

The bruised leaves of the common plantain is an excellent antidote, and always convenient. Rub them over the eruptions and bind them on if possible. Fine table salt often effects a cure. Application of soft soap sometimes afford relief. Sweet oil is one of the surest and most agreeable remedies. Bathe the irritated parts frequently with the oil.

FOR LOVE OR KINDRED?

BY MARY BUTLER.

PRISCILLA DREWRY sat in one of the window-seats of the old-fashioned schoolroom at Drewry Manor. The pale rays of an October sun, shining through the small panes behind her, seemed to have given up the attempt to make the sombre room look brighter, and to have concentrated all their light upon the beautiful creature sitting there. They shone upon the brown velvet dress that fitted her tall, commanding figure so perfectly, upon the delicate carmine in her soft cheeks, and the crimson of her arched lip; they brought out strange lights and shadows among the thick, short curls of her rough, dusky hair, and tawny gleams in the sombre blackness of her eyes. For Priscilla was one of those women set apart from the rest of her set to be flattered and worshiped and loved. Priscilla was a beauty.

Ever since Lady Laura Drewry took her seventeen-year-old daughter to London and pawned her diamonds to pay for her presentation dress, Priscilla had been by common acknowledgment one of the most beautiful women in society. That was eight years before; and still, at twenty-five, she not only held her own, but far outshone all newcomers.

And she had many difficulties in her path. She had been out for seven seasons, and had not "gone off" yet, a circumstance chiefly owing to her reluctance to fulfill a certain family arrangement—an arrangement which young girls in all the freshness of their *debut* used against her with great effect. Then there were dark whispers in society as to the conduct and sudden disappearance of her brother Charles; and worse than all, the Drewrys were exceedingly poor. How they managed to come up to London year after year from their place in the North, and hold their own with people who could count their income by thousands to Robert Drewry's hundreds, was one of those mysteries which perhaps only beautiful, proud Priscilla herself could explain. But they did. Robert Drewry had one of the prettiest houses in Park Lane for three months every year; Priscilla had her carriage, her hack for the Row, her costly dresses and dainty head-gear from Paris, her box at the Opera, her "evenings" once a week.

A strange life, truly! But the girl had been brought up to it, and it seemed to her quite the thing for people in their position, who were unfortunately poor, to do.

"If mamma had only not been so well connected!" sighed Priscilla sometimes, as she saw her father turn away from the breakfast-table, his appetite spoiled by the pile of bills before him.

"Your mother's connections are our only chance, since you will do nothing for us. How long do you think I can keep my head above water? How long do you think Lord Carstone will wait for you?" her father would growl, looking with grudging admiration at his daughter's lovely face. And then Priscilla would shrug her sloping shoulders, and go away to the schoolroom, to convey to Laura and Annie the little knowledge she herself possessed.

"When will you marry Lord Carstone?" old Mr. Drewry asked his daughter over and over again. "He will not wait forever, you know. But that he feels you have a better right to that money than he has, I dare say he'd have taken someone else long ago."

"I am not even engaged to him. I do not love him. You shall not hurry me, papa," was the only answer Robert Drewry's most passionate threats or abject entreaties ever procured from his stately daughter.

But all that was over; the "family arrangement" had fallen to the ground; for Priscilla had fallen in love with the only son of one of the wealthiest men in England, who was perfectly willing to do all and every thing for Drewry that Lord Carstone would have done.

Without a murmur Robert Drewry accepted the new state of affairs; indeed, he had begun to despair of ever bringing about a marriage between his lovely daughter and the little delicate nobleman. And he hardly wondered that she should prefer gay, laughing, handsome George Meath, with his brown eyes and his six feet of stature.

But there were some things connected with George Meath which Mr. Drewry found very hard to overlook. When, thirty years before, Meath's Bank began to be talked of, and "Meath's luck" discussed and envied

on the Stock Exchange, no one knew exactly who Meath was, except that he was a quiet, soft-voiced, gentlemanly fellow, who had apparently the power of turning everything he touched into gold, and an absorbing passion for good society.

Good society was the god he worshiped. For that, he lavished his gold in costly entertainments; for that, he sacrificed the natural affections of his heart to wed an Earl's daughter; for that, he sent his son to Eton and Cambridge, and would not hear of his defiling his finger-tips with "trade." No, George should be a gentleman, declared his father proudly. And George gratified the desire of the old man's heart in that he was every inch a gentleman, although perhaps it was to his own pure and noble nature that he owed the distinction, and not to the people he mixed with.

One night in June, George Meath, with a score or so of other mortals, struggled up the staircase of the little house in Park Lane, on the occasion of the Drewrys' dance; and, pausing before he entered the brilliant flower-decked room, he saw Priscilla standing opposite to him, her lovely face raised a little, and her dark head tilted back against the blue-and-gold paneling of the wall. He looked at her for a few minutes, and, when he was presented to her, he knew by heart every detail of her rich, dark loveliness—nay, of her very dress, from the scarlet flower in her hair to the shining buckle on her shoe. And at that first glance he loved her, and almost immediately set about showing her that he did so.

For George Meath was not by any means a timid wooer. He had heard rumors certainly of an "understanding" between the Drewrys and Lord Carstone; but, when he had ascertained that Priscilla was not engaged to him, he thought of that no more. For he told himself that, although she could look back on ten generations, while he could barely count two, he was as much a gentleman as she was a lady, and that he could but try his fortune. And he did try, so persistently that Priscilla awoke to the knowledge that she had a heart, that at last her time was come, and that she loved George Meath.

Before the Drewrys left London, they were formally engaged, and the young man pressed for an early marriage; but to this Miss Drewry would by no means consent.

"You do not know me well enough," she said, with her sweet, bright smile; "you

know me only as the princess with the glass slipper and the golden coach. You must know me as Cinderella sitting among the ashes."

"What nonsense!" protested George, eagerly. "Of course I know Mr. Drewry is not rich; but I would dress you in diamonds if it pleased you."

But Priscilla held firmly to her purpose. It was arranged, therefore, that the marriage should take place at Christmas; and in the meantime George was to come to Drewry to see his Cinderella without her fairy god-mother's gifts about her. And, if he could have loved her more than when she was one of the spoiled darlings of society, envied and flattered and caressed, he loved her more now—the guide and ruler of the frugal household, her father's friend and confederate, her sisters' teacher and playmate.

She had no secrets from him. She told him of her brother, how he had disappeared, overwhelmed by debt, from the regiment in which he had been lieutenant, and was now serving, under a false name, as a common trooper at Dover. She told him also how Drewry Manor, which had been theirs for generations, might at any moment be seized by their creditors.

"That shall all be altered now," said George, confidently. "I should like to see anyone put your father out of Drewry while I am here!"

So Priscilla sat in the schoolroom this October morning and thought of her lover.

A telegram from the bank had summoned him hastily to London on the day before, and he had gone, promising to write to Priscilla as soon as he arrived.

"I shall get the letter to-night—my first love-letter!" thought the girl, smiling to herself. I dare say it is something about the place at Richmond which Mr. Meath is buying for us."

The noisy opening of the schoolroom door and the entrance of her father roused her from her reverie. She looked at him in surprise. He was a violent, passionate man at all times, a man embittered by an embarrassed estate and a perpetual load of debt, as he persisted in living beyond his means. But now his features were absolutely convulsed with rage, and he had the wild, disordered look of one who has just received a violent mental shock.

"What is the matter?" she cried, starting up, while Laura ceased playing and fixed

her large eyes on her father. "Is—is it bailiffs?"

Priscilla was so used to the sudden coming of these birds of ill omen that her first thought was of them.

Looking at her with a certain glaring fury in his eyes, Mr. Drewry flung a crumpled newspaper beside her on the window-seat, and, exclaiming, "There's your precious lover for you!" began walking rapidly up and down the room.

She took the newspaper with trembling fingers and opened it, but the lines swam before her eyes, and she faltered out:—

"Tell me—I—I cannot read it!"

"You would not have Carstone, your own relative, who would have given me back your mother's fortune, and let me end my days in peace and comfort. No, you must have this fellow, a millionaire to-day, a pauper to-morrow! Well, do you see it now? Are you proud of your great catch, a man that never heard of his own grandfather, bah!"

She did see it. With a sickening fear at her heart, she turned from her father to the newspaper in her hand, and there, in large headings, she read, "Great Failures in the City," "Stoppage of Meath's Bank," "Excitement on the Stock Exchange," "Meeting of Creditors;" and then, a little farther on—"Suspected Swindling Transactions," "Flight of the Cashier," "Disappearance of Mr. Meath."

The newspaper slipped from her hand, and she fell forward upon the window-seat. She did not faint or cry out, or burst into tears; she only lay there, like a child shrinking from a blow, her head pressed against the oak window-shutter, her ashen-white face hidden in her hands. For she knew well what the failure of the great bank meant to her and hers.

Drewry already tottering on the brink of ruin—Drewry, that had belonged to her race for six generations—must go. And her father, and her two helpless, beautiful young sisters—what would become of them? And her brother, the poor young soldier, who was to have gone, with George's money and through George's influence, to a good appointment in Australia—what hope was there for him now?

Laura left the piano, and, kneeling down by her sister, tried to soothe her; and Robert Drewry, seeing the agony on her pale face, grew penitent.

"It's all over," he groaned, sitting down near her; "it's all over, now, Priscilla. As soon as Shaffer and Spiro hear of this they'll foreclose. I've never been free from the Jews all my life, and they have me by the throat at last. Great heavens, what am I to do when Drewry is taken from me?"

Priscilla hardly heard him. The thought had struck her that she would never see her lover again, that the letter she expected would be to say farewell for ever, that she would see him no more. Her agony was unendurable.

"What is Drewry to me?" she cried, raising her bowed head. "What is anything, compared to George? Oh, if I had been his wife! If I had the right to be with him, to comfort and help him! But I must stay here and go mad or break my heart!"

She sank back, trembling and sobbing, on the seat.

"That is the only bit of luck in the whole business!" exclaimed her father. "What would become of you if you were his wife?"

She did not answer directly.

"Father," she said, after a pause, looking with great, solemn eyes straight into his face, "I must see him again. Will you take me to London?"

"Good heavens, no, Priscilla! You will see him, never fear! Why, his engagement to you is the best card in his hand now; and of course he knows it! I only wonder he did not bring the news himself."

"You do not know him as I do, papa. He will not come; he will write and bid me farewell, and I—I shall die!"

"What do you want?" cried Mr. Drewry, irritably. "If he has the good feeling to keep away, why, let him! You could not possibly marry him now."

Priscilla made no reply; but a slight color rose in her pale cheeks, and a look almost of happiness crossed her face.

He caught the look, and interpreting it aright, burst into a violent rage.

"Yes, yes, you would! You would see your father and those two girls homeless, penniless! You would see Drewry taken from us, that has been ours for three hundred years! You would forget that poor boy eating his heart in a common barrack-room! Such things are nothing to you, compared with your selfish passion!"

"Father," said Priscilla, turning her face towards him, "what do you want me to do?"

"I want you," was the brutal answer,

"to have some natural affection for those nearest and dearest to you, to think a little more of your brother and sisters, and a little less of this swindler's son, if he is not a swindler himself."

"But what am I to do?"

"You know very well. You know how anxious Lord Carstone is to do us justice with respect to poor Laura's fortune—the fortune out of which I was cheated. Let me write to him and tell him the Meath affair is 'off'; that will be quite enough."

The loss of the money—fifty thousand pounds—which the Earl's young daughter had forfeited when she dropped from her window into handsome Robert Drewry's arms had embittered his whole life. Even his daughters, used as they were to his violence, shrank terrified from his rage and despair when he found that the dying Earl, implacable to the last, had left it to a distant relative—Lord Carstone.

Lord Carstone, a wealthy and scrupulously honest man, was exceedingly embarrassed by the bequest, for he felt that Lady Laura's money ought to have gone, not to a distant cousin, but to her daughters. Therefore he had proceeded to Drewry, and, with her father's hearty concurrence, proposed to Priscilla, and offered to settle her mother's money upon her.

But Priscilla was obdurate. She did not love him, she said; and she utterly declined to bind herself in any way. She would make no promises, enter into no engagements. If he preferred to wait, he might. Perhaps in time she would like him better.

So the little nobleman, with his delicate frame and his faithful heart, waited, and hoped against hope, even when he heard of her engagement to George Meath; for he loved her with a patient, dogged affection that knew no change.

"When Priscilla said to her father, 'What am I to do?' she knew well what his answer would be. And yet, oh, if there were any other way to save Drewry, to help her family! She laid her head upon her young sister's shoulder, for she felt the need of some human sympathy in her bitter trial.

"Laura," she whispered, "think of me, child. What am I to do?"

"Is it really in your power to keep us here in the old place?" asked the younger girl.

"Yes, I believe so."

"Oh, then, have pity on us! Think of Annie and me! Think of poor papa there!

Think of Charlie, who should have Drewry afterwards!"

"Father," said Priscilla, raising her head, "I must see him again. I tell you I must! It's of no use trying to stop me. And, after that, when I have bidden him good-by forever, you may make what terms you like with Lord Carstone; I will fulfill them, I promise you—but I must see George again."

Mr. Drewry hesitated a little; but the resolute set of the colorless lips, the steady, solemn eyes, reassured him.

"I believe you, Priscilla," he said; "I know what your word is. I will go to London and fetch this fellow, and then leave the rest to you."

Mr. Drewry went to London that evening, and for two days Priscilla heard nothing of him. In what misery and anguish the girl spent that time her pale cheeks and heavy eyes alone told. On the third day, at noon, she received a telegram from her father, bidding her bring the pony and trap to meet the five-o'clock train from London.

"I shall see him again—I shall see him again!" repeated Priscilla to herself, as she drove the shaggy pony along the road across the moor. "I shall have his clinging arms about me—he will kiss me once again! And, oh, I shall tell him that, if it could be, I would go with him to the end of the earth, or into a poor London lodging, and live in shabbiness and poverty in the city where I was once worshiped and adored, and think it happiness to do so!"

Her cheeks flushed, her dark eyes brightened at the thought, and hope whispered to her that perhaps, even now, there might be found some way of escape from the promise which, in the first hour of her anguish, she had been tormented and goaded into giving.

When she reached the little station, she tied her pony to the gate, and began walking briskly up and down the platform.

She watched the train come in. She saw her father get out, glance at her, and turn again to the carriage. She saw her lover—oh, how stern and pale he looked!—step down on to the platform, and, looking towards her, raise his hat. Then she walked over to him and gave him her hand.

"So you got my telegram?" said Mr. Drewry, as George went round to the pony's head and began to unfasten him. "He is very reasonable—clearly understands that

the whole business must drop now—quite content to say good-by and all that sort of thing, you know.”

Priscilla felt her heart grow heavy, and began to wonder how it was that she was so happy a few minutes before; but she turned to her lover and said, steadily enough:—

“George, will you walk with me? Papa can take the pony home. We will go by the moor.”

So they started off. How often had they walked upon the moor together, talking and planning, looking forward to the time to come, to their marriage, to the long, happy life before them, the young man, tall and stalwart, with a gun on his shoulder and a couple of dogs at his heel, the girl clinging to his arm with both hands, her lovely, smiling face raised to his, her thick curls playing about her forehead in the keen autumn wind.

And now they walked upon it once more, Priscilla with a feeling of bitter disappointment and pain at her heart that he should so quietly have accepted what her father had told him, that he should so easily have given her up, and George, silent, cold and miserable, almost heart-broken to think that this girl, this pearl among women, the sweetest and fairest and best of her sex, had never loved him at all, but had loved only the wealth that he could give her.

He looked at her once or twice as she walked beside him, her beautiful, pale face turned away so that he could not see only the oval of her cheek and the thick, crisp curls about her ear. She was very pale, he thought, and thinner than when he saw her last; there was a sharpened look about the chin and jaw, and—yes—leaning forward a little, he found out the secret of the carefully turned-away head,—large, heavy tears were falling down her face.

“Priscilla,” he cried, “you do care for me, after all!”

“Care for you, George!” she answered, a sob breaking from her quivering lips. “Care for you!”

“Then, no matter what happens, I am happy!” and, stopping, he clasped her in his arms. “Yes, I am happy, Priscilla,” he repeated, releasing her, and walking on at her side. “If you are true, I will face anything—anything! Mr. Drewry told me I must give you up—that it was your desire. I suppose”—bitterly—“that the wish was father to the message.”

Priscilla did not say a word; but she felt herself trembling and turning cold from head to foot.

“I was coming to you,” he went on, “as soon as ever I could get away; but I have been overwhelmed with business from morning till night, and almost from night till morning. Everything is on my shoulders now—and I know so little; my poor father kept me in complete ignorance.”

“I suppose nothing can be saved?”

“Nothing. You know father was about to buy Glatton Hall—his gift to us on our wedding, dear.” He stopped, and, slipping his arm about her waist, touched her cheek with his lips.

“Yes,” replied the girl, in a low voice, “I am listening.”

“My father, in going over the books, or in trying to realize some securities, seems to have found something wrong. He was seen to call Mr. Manx, the cashier, hurriedly into his office. That was near closing hour. The clerks went home as usual; but, late that night, one of them, passing near the bank, saw Manx issue from the private entrance, carrying a small leather bag. The next morning neither Manx nor my father made his appearance; the strong room was found to be rifled, bonds and securities to the value of two hundred thousand pounds, besides a large sum in gold, were missing, and”—

“But why should Mr. Meath take his own money? Wasn’t it his bank?” interrupted Priscilla.

“My darling, hundreds of people had money in Meath’s Bank. He invested it for them, you know, or speculated with it, and paid them interest upon it.”

“Oh, I see!” said the girl.

“And now you can trust me still? Can you cleave to me under this disgrace?”

“It is not that—it is not that!” she answered, sobbing. “If all the world cried shame upon you, I would help you to bear it—willingly—gladly!”

She was trying to tell him—trying hard; but the task was almost beyond her strength.

“You shall not bear shame, Priscilla,” he declared. “I know—I am convinced that my father is innocent; and, with Heaven’s help”—he stopped and raised his hat—“I shall prove it! But can you wait for me—long years perhaps—until I have removed the slur from my name, until I have worked for and provided a home, humble at best,

for you? Can you give up the great world, give up Drewry, and all we were to do for it, give up trying to help your brother and sisters, and wait—five years, say—with the prospect of becoming a poor man's wife? It is a hard thing to ask you, I know; but—Priscilla, what is it I see in your face?"

If she had answered with one word, "Despair!" she would have answered rightly. For every word he uttered pierced her heart like a knife. His love and unquestioning trust in her were more than she could bear; her head swam and a feeling of deadly sickness overpowered her.

"I am ill," she said faintly; "I am ill!"

They had crossed the moor by this time, and reached a wood known as Drewry Chase. The sun had set, and the twilight was dark among the trees. He led her to the trunks of a fallen beech near the path-way, and, kneeling beside her, supported her head against his breast. And there, with her face hidden from his eyes, in a few broken words she sobbed out the truth.

She expected that he would fling her from him in a storm of passionate indignation—that he would leave her with bitter reproaches that would haunt her all her life. But he did nothing of the kind. She felt his broad chest heave, his clasping arms tremble; and, although he loosened one hand from about her, it was only to push back the thick curls of her hair and press his lips to her forehead.

"Don't—don't!" she whispered, trying to release herself. "Oh, if you are kind to me, I shall not be able to bear it!"

"My child," he faltered, with inexpressible tenderness, "my poor child!"

"I felt that I must see you once more. I told my father so. But this is good-by, George; this is good-by forever!"

"Not forever, Priscilla. You are mine, in spite of your own words, I will never give you up!"

"But you must! Do you not understand? All my life I have had this prospect before me—to marry Lord Carstone and save Drewry. And I kept putting it off year after year. I thought sometimes that he would die! Is not that terrible?"

"And do you think it right to sell yourself for fifty thousand pounds, even though a wedding-ring goes with it?" he asked bitterly.

"No; but I must think of my brother, who ought to own Drewry after papa, and

of my young sisters, that they may not have to eat the bread of dependence all their lives."

He stood up, walked a little distance away, turned, and came back to her.

"I do not know what to do," he said.

"Priscilla, will you wait two years for me?"

"If I wait one year," she returned passionately, "we shall all be homeless!" She rose as she spoke and stood beside him. "George," she went on steadily, "there is no way out of this; we must part!"

And then, as many another sorely tried and tempted woman has done, she burst into tears and clung to him, sobbing and trembling, entreating him not to be angry with her, to forgive her, and bidding him stay and go in the same breath.

"There, there, Priscilla," he said, drying her eyes; "I know it is not your fault—at least, it was a fault repented of as soon as committed. No, I will not go to the Drewry. I shall bid you good-by here, and turn back. No child, not good-by forever, but good-by for a year, or longer, perhaps. My love—my darling, be true to me! I have not released you—I never shall. Ah, there is the house!" as the great gloomy mansion, with a few glimmering lights in it, showed through a break in the trees. "Good-by, Priscilla—my love—my love! Remember you are mine—you belong to me!"

He took her in his arms and kissed her with long clinging kisses; and then, when he had held her almost a minute, looking upon her upturned tear-wet face, he turned away hastily and disappeared in the wood.

The girl stood where he had left her, trying to realize that this was indeed the last of her love-dream, that for her the sweetness, the beauty, the glamor of youth and love were gone forever. But she could not; in spite of herself, her cheeks flushed and her heart beat fast as the words, "You are mine—you belong to me," rang in her ears. And, as she walked towards the house, she could not help telling herself that some way out of the difficulties that beset them would be found.

But, when months passed, and the creditors began to threaten Drewry once more, her courage failed her; and when, one snowy January morning her father declared that there was no help for it now, Carstone must be written to, she assented, with a feeling of dull despair that was more than the sharpest pain.

It was a warm May night, and a large company had assembled in Mr. Drewry's pretty little house in Park Lane, to dance, to take part in *tableaux vivants*, and to gossip and flirt.

Eighteen months had passed since Priscilla had parted from her lover in Drewry Chase, and already the story of the failure of Meath's Bank was well-nigh forgotten. Forgotten also was the sensation that arose upon the finding of Mr. Meath's body, stabbed in the back, and concealed in one of the bank cellars. A warrant had been issued against the cashier Manx; but he had up to the present eluded pursuit; and George, after that sad vindication of his father's memory, had suddenly disappeared from the world that knew him, and was as much forgotten—save by one heart—as if he had never existed.

In vain Priscilla wearied and longed for some word from him, some tidings of him. In the dead of the night she tortured her unhappy heart with questions, and wetted her pillow with tears, while the winter winds moaned about Drewry and the winter rain beat upon the roof that her hand was to secure to her kindred. For the fate that had hung over her so long was close upon her now, and soon the regret and longing, the passionate tears, would be a sin.

"Give me a long day, papa," she had said, with a quivering smile, when her father returned to Drewry, three months after the breaking of Meath's Bank, accompanied by the delicate little lord who had become possessed of Lady Laura's money; and the words, spoken in jest, were meant very much in earnest.

He had given her a long day. The Drewrys did not spend that spring in London, but went to the Mediterranean in Lord Carstone's three-hundred-ton steam-yacht; and, floating upon those sunlit waters, free from the cares and shifts, the never-ending humiliation and miseries of poverty that beset her at home, seeing also how happy her father and sisters were, Priscilla began to think that she was forgetting—began to think that the respect and gratitude she felt towards Lord Carstone would develop into or take the place of love.

When the weather grew hot, they went northward, and, when winter came again, Drewry was crowded with guests, and Christmas was kept there as it had not been kept for many years. But, when Parliament

opened, the Drewrys came to town, and Priscilla knew her "long day" would soon be over.

So, through the pretty blue-and-gold rooms, with their lights and music, their scent of flowers and rustle of dresses, and soft laughter, ran a stream of gossip about "Miss Drewry's luck."

"I hear she is to wear the Carstone diamonds to-night," said one lady to another, as they watched the dancing.

"Yes. How wise she was to bring on the family arrangement again, when her *affaire de cœur* fell through! Do you know, I thought she was the sort of girl to marry that poor fellow Meath, and go off with him somewhere."

"She'd have ruined every one belonging to her if she had. There she is! Why, how old she looks!"

Priscilla did look old. She was beautiful—her face would be beautiful at sixty—but, at twenty-seven, she was no longer young. The last eighteen months had in some mysterious way robbed her of her freshness and bloom. Many people remarked it as she walked slowly through the rooms, her hand on Lord Carstone's arm, Lord Carstone's diamonds shining in her dusky hair and on her breast and arms. She had lost her strength, too. The robust health that enabled her to dance all night in a crowded ball-room and take a before-breakfast canter round the Park the next morning, or walk her ten miles over a Westmoreland moor and come home laughing and hungry to dinner, seemed to have deserted her.

"Are you tired, dear?" asked Lord Carstone gently, noticing the weary look on her beautiful face.

"Just a little. Look at Laura there! Poor child, it is her first ball and her first conquest. It is her turn now, Robert."

"Yes," he answered, as that young lady swept by them in a cloud of white lace and white roses, her lips parted in a smile as she listened to something her partner was saying.

"You have kept me waiting a long time, Priscilla."

"I told you why," she replied earnestly. "I have made no pretence to what I do not—cannot feel."

"I know," he said hurriedly, a shadow crossing his delicate clean-cut features, "that you have concealed nothing from me; it is that which gives me hope, that some

day—in ten years perhaps, if I live so long”—he paused and sighed—"I shall win the real love of your heart."

She made no answer; and they walked slowly into the little flower-scented conservatory, and down a couple of steps leading to an open space where a fountain threw up silver spray from among an ingenious arrangement of ferns, and there were a couple of rustic seats almost concealed in flowers.

"They wanted to have some lanterns here; but I objected," observed Priscilla, gathering aside her long white train and seating herself. "See, the moon is rising."

"Are you sure you will not take cold? It is quite chilly here."

"Oh, no! But you!" suddenly becoming aware that Lord Carstone was shivering. "How thoughtless I am! I quite forgot how much a change of temperature affects you; let us go back."

"No," he said gently. "I will go and get an overcoat and bring you a wrap. I should like to stay here a little while; it is so seldom I have you all to myself."

Priscilla turned her great shadowy eyes upon him as he disappeared, and wondered at his quiet, persistent devotion. How a passion so deep and so enduring could exist, absolutely without return, in his weak delicate frame was a constant source of marvel to her. But her thoughts soon went back to the unforgotten, unforgettable past.

She had sat here with George Meath in the first happy days of their engagement; she remembered, oh, so well, the loving words he had said to her! With a start she drew herself up.

"I must not think—I must not!" she muttered, and began hastily walking up and down the little path by the fountain.

Suddenly she stopped; surely there was some one standing in the black shadow of the tall ferns! As she gazed, with a horrible fear of she knew not what, the figure moved and came forward into the moonlight.

"George," she cried, raising her clasped hands, "George!"

"Yes," he answered, in a low, steady voice, looking at her from head to foot—from the diamond wreath on her dark hair to the diamond buckle on her embroidered shoe; "I have been here some time, looking at you and the man you are going to sell yourself to. I see that you are already wearing some of the purchase-money."

"Oh, you are cruel—you are cruel!" she cried faintly.

"Am I cruel? I have come home from Sydney, where I obtained a good situation, and worked hard—hard, Priscilla; but the work was sweet to me, for it was for you. Every sovereign I earned, every step I ascended, brought me so much nearer to you—you whom I trusted, you whom I never doubted. When I had all things ready, even the house and furniture and a little pony-carriage that my wife might not miss her drives, I came home for her—I say I came home for her."

His voice faltered, and he stopped, the agony and despair in his heart mastering the quiet scorn with which he was trying to speak.

Priscilla said nothing. She stood before him motionless as a statue all shining with precious stones and lace and satin, her hands clasped together, her white lips apart, her burning eyes fixed on his.

"I have been here some days," he went on, recovering himself. "I know that all I set my heart upon, all I have thought and dreamed of, all I have planned and worked for for almost two years, will never be mine. I know it; and I have come here to look at you—at the bedizened and jeweled coquette that I loved and revered as the truest and best woman in the world. Why, what a fool I was! All the money that I have gathered together with anxiety and toil and self-denial would hardly buy you one of the diamonds in your hair!"

He raised his head and drew a long breath. She saw his face—pale as death in the faint moonlight. She saw how, with an iron will, he restrained his emotion.

"I had to do it, George," she faltered, in the silence. "Could I see my father driven out of the Drewry—the old place—when Robert—Lord Carstone was waiting only for a word from my lips to pay off those dreadful Jews! Oh, if you have suffered, I have suffered also!"

"You! What shall I suffer upon my voyage back, alone—alone?"

Overcome by the utter failure of his heart's dearest hopes, the young man turned away, and, hiding his face in his hands, leaned upon the marble basin of the fountain.

Priscilla, shaking from head to foot, crept near and touched him timidly with her hand. Slight as was the touch, he felt it,

and, turning, looked down upon the blanched terrified face, the great despairing dusky eyes raised to his. Then, moved by a sudden mad rage at he knew not what—her loveliness, her costly dress, the passionate affection he still bore her, the suffering she caused him—he raised his hand and struck her.

She would have fallen but that some one caught her from behind; and she almost forgot the blow as she saw Lord Carstone beside her.

"You—you ruffian!" cried the little lord, in violent excitement. "I saw you strike her! You should be horsewhipped—you—you coward!" And, stammering and shaking with passion, Lord Carstone advanced towards the young man.

"Keep away from me!" said George, in a suppressed voice, looking down at his puny antagonist. "I can hardly refrain from killing you!"

"Don't—don't touch him, George!" sobbed Priscilla. Then, laying her hand on Lord Carstone's arm, she tried to draw him away, calming his dangerous excitement as well as she could.

"Did I strike you, Priscilla? Did I hurt you?" asked George, in a strangely gentle voice.

"Oh, no, no; nothing can hurt me now!" answered the girl. "Only—do go away! You do not know what harm you may do—indeed he is not strong!"

But the harm was already done! With a low choking cry, Lord Carstone fell at her feet.

She knelt down beside him at once, and, raising his head upon her lap, signed to George to bring her water. He did so, filling his hat from the basin and dashing its contents into the dying man's face. But he never spoke nor moved; the good and gentle heart that beat so feebly for thirty years was still at last. Perhaps he was happy; for he died, as he had often wished to die, in the arms of the woman he had loved so vainly and so well.

One cold bright April morning two ladies richly and elegantly dressed, sat in the Park, looking with a rather languid interest at the "newest things" in gowns and hats that passed them. At least one of them was doing so, turning her large fawn-like eyes now upon the passing crowd and now upon an exceedingly handsome little boy whom a

stately nurse was slowly carrying up and down before her. For Laura Drewry had "gone off" at the end of her first season, and was most romantically happy and fond of her husband and baby, although she was now four years married.

Her companion, who did not seem at all interested in the dresses, was also beautiful, although she could no longer be called young, with the cold serene beauty of a Greek cameo. For the dusty red would never rise in the smooth white cheeks again, the sweet laughter of youth never ripple about the curving lips. The great dark eyes had a haunted look in their depths, the whole face a shadow upon it, as though it were the reflection of some great and abiding sorrow.

And yet the rich Miss Drewry had more suitors than ever the beautiful Miss Drewry had. For Priscilla was now a rich woman. After the inquest upon the body of Lord Carstone, it was found that, with the exception of the small estate from which he took his title, everything he possessed was left to her; and the will was dated shortly after he had gone away from the Drewry—oh, so long ago—a rejected lover!"

So Priscilla found herself rich now that it was too late, now that half the world divided her from George Meath, now the shadow of a grave lay between them.

She did what she could with her wealth. She cleared Drewry, and was very generous to her father and brother. She gave with a lavish hand; but she hated the money even as she gave it. For she knew that George would come back to her if she were poor, and that he would never come while she was rich.

"I don't know why you wished so much to come here this morning," she said, turning to her sister; "you don't seem to care in the least about the dresses."

"Well, perhaps I had another motive, or perhaps it is on the baby's account," replied the Honorable Mrs. McNamaragh, with a slightly nervous smile. "Priscilla, dear, do you know Mr. Meath is in England?"

"Yes, I have heard so. I—I have not seen him."

The slight hesitation, the look of pain on the pale proud face, told Laura what she wanted to know.

"It is your money that keeps him away from you, Priscilla," she said softly.

"Yes, I suppose so. The trouble at first

was my poverty, now it is my wealth; if it were not that, it would be something else. Why do you speak of him, Laura?"

"Because I want to see you happy—as happy as I am with my Henry," replied her sister earnestly. "Priscilla, dear Priscilla, he loves you still with his whole heart! I met him at Lady Topham's dance last night, and his manner, his agitation—oh, I could not be deceived!"

"I thought," said Priscilla, in a low voice, "that I had killed his love."

"He is here on some business connected with his firm," went on Laura eagerly—"artesian well, or railway plant, or something like that, that they can't get out there—and—and he is going back in a fortnight. He is staying with the Tophams," Laura went on, "and he walks across the Park every morning to the City. Priscilla—why, where are you going?"

"Home, home!" she cried, rising hurriedly. "Would you have me seek him?"

But Laura caught her arm.

"You must not go!" she whispered eagerly. "He is looking at us—don't you see him?"

Priscilla did see him coming swiftly towards her with his long swinging step, a full head above most of those he passed, a little thinner, a little browner.

He would have passed with a bow, but that, inspired with a sudden desperate courage, she took a step or two forward, held out a trembling hand, and uttered his name.

"I did not think you would ever give me your hand again, Priscilla," he said, his cheeks flushing as he clasped it in his. "I—I behaved so like a ruffian that dreadful night. I think I was mad for the time."

"Do not speak of it," said Priscilla, looking round for her sister; but that discreet lady had judged it better to efface herself for the present, and was at some little distance, busy with nurse and baby. "I have forgiven it long ago. Is it true that you were going back to Sydney without—without seeing me?"

"Not without seeing you—I have seen you many times—but without speaking to you. I was going back to the hard life and the hard work that will, I suppose, teach me to forget."

"I—I don't want you to forget me, George."

Such a timid hesitating whisper! Such shy dusky eyes raised entreatingly to his!

Such a pitiful nervous trembling of the short arched lip!

"Priscilla," he cried, turning on her almost fiercely, "are you going to play with me and mock me again?"

She made no answer. The pale April sun shone upon her tall graceful figure, upon the gray velvet of her dress, upon her beautiful agitated face, upon the tawny darkness of her eyes.

He looked at her, and, as he looked, the charm of her presence, of being near her and hearing her voice, even for a little while, overcame him.

"Come," he said, drawing her hand through his arm, "I will be happy for this once. Tell me the old sweet lies, Priscilla, with the old sweet smile, and I will believe them, although you have deceived me twice!"

She turned with him, and they walked slowly between the trees.

"I suppose you are happy, now that you are rich, Priscilla?" he said, presently.

"Happy!" she echoed the word incredulously, looking into his face; then, perceiving something more than the bitter mocking he intended her to see, she asked nervously, "When are you going away?"

"Away? Back to Sydney, you mean? In about a fortnight."

She lowered her head so that the top of her gray velvet hat was presented to his eyes.

"George," she said breathlessly, "will—you take me with you?"

"Priscilla!"

"Yes, yes, I know." She raised her face, all dyed with blushes, and, trembling and panting, spoke on. "I am bold—I am forward—I am unmaidenly; but don't refuse me, for I love you with all my heart, and I cannot—I cannot let you go!"

"Priscilla," he faltered, bending over her—and somehow both her hands were in his now—"Priscilla, you are not trifling with me?"

"Trifling with you! Oh, it is your turn now; you can pay back all you suffered at my hands! But don't—don't, George! I—I want to be your wife, dear, loving you, faithful to you, working for you. I don't want poor Robert's money; I hate it; I always hated it; for it kept us apart. I want to be your little Cinderella. Do you remember how in days gone by I took you to Drewry to see Cinderella without her glass

slipper and her fairy coach? Well, I want to be Cinderella again; I am tired of the ball and of dancing with the Prince. Will you have me, George? Will you make me happy all my life?"

"Oh, Priscilla, do you really mean it? Will you give up all, and come away with me—a poor man's wife?"

"Yes, yes, I do. I can please myself now, George."

"Then I believe you, and I take you to

myself—my own—my own at last!" And there in the Green Park, before the eyes of all who chose to look, he stooped and kissed her on the lips. And, although he did not go away in a fortnight—for there were many money matters to arrange, and he would not touch anything that had belonged to Lord Carstone—yet, when he did go, his wife Priscilla went with him; and she was happy, for she had found her heart's rest.

SUSPENSE.

BY CAROLINE W. D. RICH.

HERE I will rest and wait! I'll watch the sea,
And note the sand-heaps on the spreading lea;
Here, from this eyrie in the green hill-side,
I hear the robin calling to his bride
In tender notes, now soft, now growing bold,
Singing of love that never can grow cold.
Yonder the wild rose blooms along the hedge,
And yellow king-cups mingle with the sedge.
Beyond the hemlocks growing near the cliff,
In a deep shadow, rides my bonnie skiff.
I wait! the south wind cometh from the sea,—
Was it my sweetheart calling unto me?
But look! a boat!—my boat!—and there, O Fate!
My rival and my love! And yet I wait!

LEWISTON, ME., 1838.

THE CORMORANT'S LUCK.

BY W. H. MACY.

SEAMEN have the reputation, not altogether undeserved, of being more superstitious than the generality of mortals. Almost every one, however strong-minded and intelligent, cherishes away down in his mind a belief in "lucky" and "unlucky" ships. He may deny it ever so earnestly; may scout the imputation as sheer nonsense; but when brought to the test, the old feeling is apt to come uppermost, and his actions to belie his bold words.

I well remember, in my boyish days, that there was always a rush of the best seamen to ship in the *Cormorant* as soon as her papers were known to be open. There were many more desirable ships, considering merely the intrinsic qualities of each; but

the *Cormorant* had always been lucky, and it was generally believed always would be. There was a venerable battered horseshoe nailed to one of the breast-hooks in her bows, so as to revolve as on a pivot, and the crews who had sailed in her entertained a sort of veneration for this symbol. If unsuccessful in a chase of whales, they went into the fore-castle after their return on board and turned the horseshoe on the nail a certain number of times; luck was sure to follow the next day, or, at least, very soon. Certain it was that the *Cormorant*, though an ancient ship, had never failed to make a successful voyage, and scarce any one had the temerity to suppose that she *could* fail.

My cousin, Joe Burrell, was several years

my senior, and arrived at that stage—only a question of time with all of us young islanders—when he was old and stout enough to go “round Cape Horn.” His father, who had been an old salt himself, was a devout believer in luck, and had curbed Joe’s impatience a whole year, having actually bespoken him a berth in the old *Cormorant* while yet she was at sea on her previous voyage. Nothing could exceed the boy’s delight when he really saw his autograph signed on her shipping articles, though the “lay” against it was not so liberal as he might have obtained in other ships of less enviable reputation. The supply of stout lads to man the *Cormorant* was always greater than the demand, and the shrewd old Quaker owner did not fail to profit a little by that fact.

Nathan Joy, her commander, had been mate of her on the previous voyage, and there was luck in him as well as the vessel. Surely no one ever began his career in the whaling business with a more flattering prospect of success than my cousin Joe. His letters to me were as frequent as his opportunities for sending them, and he always wrote in high spirits, giving such glowing descriptions of his adventures as fired my boyish ardor, and made me chafe with impatient longing for the time when I, too, should be deemed worthy to join the crusade against the leviathan.

A letter dated when the *Cormorant* was about two years out from home reported her near the Galapagos Islands, wanting only a few whales to fill her. As the letter was five months old when received, we began to look for Joe’s arrival from the day of its reception. But months passed on, and winter set in without bringing further tidings, until not even her proverbial good luck was proof against certain vague fears that some accident might have befallen her.

Every whaleship in those days carried a distinguishing signal, or “owner’s flag,” of large size, and it was customary, on arrival at Homes’s Hole, or “Oldtown” (as we always called the little port of Edgartown) to send this flag by the little packet-sloop which plied between the Vineyard and Nantucket, thus reporting as early as possible the identity of the ship to the anxious ones on the lookout for her. Many a day we kept the spyglass in operation from the “walk” on the housetop, vainly watching for the great, blue flag with a C in white, which was to set our minds at rest about the *Cormorant*. It

came not, and even the most sanguine shook their heads, and admitted that the doctrine of luck had in this case proved a failure.

Then there drifted home a rumor that a certain whaleship, believed to be the *Cormorant*, had been cut off at Juan Fernandez by a party of Chilian convicts. What had been the fate of the crew could not be known, but it was almost sure that the pirates had kept possession of the vessel, and started off on some sort of marauding expedition in the Pacific. The penal settlement at the island had been broken up through the inefficiency of those placed in authority over the malefactors, and some of the latter had been summarily shot, as Napoleon is said to have shot the Turks at Jaffa, as the easiest way of disposing of them. But those who had seized the ship had made good their escape, and it was long ere their whereabouts was known.

My uncle, Joe’s father, still clung to his faith in the ultimate safety of the vessel and crew. “I tell you,” said he, “there’s luck in her old timbers, and she’ll turn up somewhere yet all right.” But spring came without any light being shed upon the mystery, and meanwhile I had grown stout enough to commence my own adventurous career, and cast my lot in the new ship *Samaria*, and prepared to fulfill what I had always been accustomed to look upon as my appointed destiny, quite undeterred by the lesson of my cousin Joe’s fate.

We were nearly up with Cape Horn in the *Samaria*, hammering away against head winds, when a homeward-bounder, under a cloud of sail, came running down on our quarter. There were many marks of resemblance about her to the *Cormorant*; so said the old seamen, who ought to know, and when she rounded to within a short distance, and flaunted the blue flag with the C in white, for which we had watched so anxiously and so long, all doubt was removed. A few minutes later and my hand was seized with an iron grip by my cousin, Joe Burrell, no longer a boy in stature, but a young Hercules.

Of course all sorts of eager questions were put, in our curiosity to learn the adventures of men who appeared as if risen from the dead; and the truth of their story, as I gathered it from Joe, was that the ship had been captured, as rumored, by a party of Chilians, who effected their purpose by surprise, boarding her while lying at Juan

Fernandez in such a force as to overpower the crew without striking a blow. Captain Joy, though not wanting in courage or in disposition to defend his property, found himself powerless, in consequence of the negligence of the watch in charge, and saw the impolicy of any attempt at resistance after the convicts were in full possession of the deck. They numbered fully seventy men, and they offered no further violence, either to himself or his crew, than such as was necessary to make themselves safe in possession.

Joe told me he never was ill-treated by any of them during the whole time that he was in their power; but he with the rest of his shipmates was confined below, constantly under guard, and only allowed to come out a few at a time, while the ship was put off with a free wind, running westward into the broad Pacific, her destination being of course, quite unknown to her rightful owners.

The leader of the pirates was a Frenchman, who spoke fluently both Spanish and English, as well as his own tongue, and was evidently a man of no ordinary intelligence, and a competent navigator. For this reason the captain and officers knew no more of the position of the ship than what little they could gather by stealth, as they were not called upon to assist in shaping her course. Barreau the Frenchman was quite equal to the work he had undertaken, and maintained the most admirable discipline among his desperadoes. He never relaxed his vigilance in the guard over his American prisoners, while, at the same time, he allowed no one of his own followers to oppose or maltreat them. He had promised Captain Joy that they should all be landed at some civilized port, if he could approach the land so as to do so without compromising his own safety.

In due time the ship, making, as they judged, a general northwest course, arrived at an island supposed to be one of the Marquesan group, and came to anchor. Barreau would not suffer one of the Americans to land, but kept up the watch and guard over them with increased vigilance. The next day after the arrival he himself took a crew in one of the whaleboats, and pulled round a point out of sight from the ship. He was absent several hours, and on his return two heavy bags were lifted out of the boat, and carried below into his stateroom, being the same which Captain Joy had formerly occupied. Nothing was said openly about the

contents of the bags, but it was whispered among the Chilians that they were filled with gold, and had been secreted at the island by Barreau on some former cruise.

Stores and provisions were taken on board until the vessel was in a complete state of readiness for a voyage of any ordinary length. All this time the pirates had been kept strictly to their work, and been allowed no time for recreation or riot; but such humdrum life was not to be endured forever by men of this stamp. They insisted upon having one grand carouse and jubilee before again putting to sea, and Barreau found himself obliged to yield. He made it conditional, however, that they should not leave the ship for that purpose, but should hold their revels on board. If his followers could be thrown off their guard while away from the vessel, there was the double danger of treachery from the savages and of a rising of the prisoners.

A renegade Englishman, who had taken up his abode on the island a year or two before, and become more than half barbarian, had established the manufacture of liquor from the "toddy" or sap of the cocoanut tree, a vile stuff, which may be warranted to kill at as many yards as any "tangle-foot" dispensed over the bar of the worst grogshop in New York or London. It was the first opportunity that the convicts had had to indulge in alcoholic stimulants, and they were not slow to buy up all the stock on hand from Cockney Ben, amounting to some dozens of bottles.

The revelry waxed loud and furious on the night previous to the day set for departure, and the desperadoes, having once given themselves up to it, appeared to have abandoned all thought of care or vigilance. The prisoners were allowed almost unlimited freedom, and were frequently invited to drink with their guards; but no more was taken by any of them than barely sufficient to avert suspicion, for the word had been quietly passed among themselves, and anxious eyes were watching the gradual progress of the drunken revel, which promised to open up a chance for striking a blow for freedom. It was a source of delight to them to observe that the master-spirit, Barreau, had little or no control of himself after he once began to drink. He was soon one of the most recklessly intoxicated of the party, and all discipline was at an end.

By midnight more than half of the Chil-

ians were laid out, stupid from the effects of their grand carouse, while many of the rest were but little better. The Frenchman, after a maudlin attempt to show that he was still himself, which resulted in a signal failure, had retired below, and fallen in a stupor across the cabin table.

Now was the time for Captain Joy to recover easy possession of his vessel, and the signal was given for which his crew had been so eagerly waiting. By simultaneous action in different parts of the ship, a few minutes sufficed to overpower the small number who were still capable of resistance; the rest were easily taken care of, and Captain Joy, with his own crew of twenty-four men, found himself once more in full command of his favorite *Cormorant*, but with seventy prisoners on his hands. It would never do to remain at their anchorage until daylight, as the natives might make an attack on seeing the new state of affairs, and the little party would be placed between two fires. Orders were given at once for lifting the anchor, and though the operation was performed as quietly as possible, it did not fail to attract attention from the shore. Canoes were soon seen approaching, but were ordered off out of range, and before the alarm had spread to all the savages the ship was a-weigh, and, with her topsails and jib drawing, moved slowly out of the bay. More canvas was added to catch the breeze, but the force detailed to guard so large a number of Chilians necessarily left the working party very short-handed. The prisoners must be got rid of, by some means, before they all recovered their sober senses, or it would be next to impossible to control so overwhelming a force.

As soon as an offing was gained the boats were lowered and filled with men, the most helpless ones being piled in with little regard to position or storage, and a few of the more sober men driven into each boat before she was cast adrift. So near the land they could not fail to reach it in safety, and their after fate among the barbarians must be their own affair. In this way about fifty were disposed of, including Barreau himself, who was still insensible. Except the few who had been wounded in the brief struggle for recapture no one was injured, and those few were retained among the twenty left on board, who were all placed in close confinement.

Thus relieved of the heaviest burden of care, our whalemens shaped their course for

Valparaiso. As no observations could be taken for the two succeeding days, it was found difficult to determine exactly what island they had visited; for the pirates had kept no log, the navigation of the ship having been left in the hands of their leader, who, though he did his work well and understandingly, had left no written record of it. But that the island was one of that portion of the Marquesas known as the Washington Group was pretty well determined. It was small, of coral formation, and thinly inhabited. Nothing definite was ever learned of the fifty men set adrift in the boats.

The *Cormorant* arrived off Valparaiso in due time, touching only long enough, however, to land the twenty desperadoes, for which the authorities did not appear to feel at all grateful, especially when it was learned that the Frenchman himself was not among them. There was no time for any questioning or investigation as to the contents of the mysterious bags, which still remained in the captain's stateroom. After leaving the place with a cracking breeze, bound up towards Cape Horn, the nature of their contents was first made known to the crew.

"Forty thousand dollars are in those two bags, all in gold," said Joe, as he finished his story, "and we all draw lays of it. The old man says it's part of the catchings of the voyage just as much as the oil."

Which there was no doubt it justly was; and thus it fell out that the *Cormorant*, with her cargo of spermaceti and the bags of yellow boys added, made the luckiest voyage of her whole career. She held her reputation until she was hauled up into the dock mud at the home-port and broken up, fairly dying with old age, as one might truly say. The horseshoe, much attenuated by corrosion, was religiously preserved, and nailed up in the bows of her successor, the *Novelty*, fresh from the shipyard. But, as if in very spite of the faithful believers, the *Novelty* was cast away on her first voyage, but a few months after leaving home, and the rusty emblem of good fortune was lost with her.

"Ah well," said my Uncle Burrell, then far advanced in years, "the bad luck was in her timbers, and not in the horseshoe. The *Cormorant* never ought to be allowed to die altogether; we might have kept a piece of the old keel to swear by, and built upon it. And it would ha' paid, too, better than building new ones, for, as long as she lived, her voyage was a sure thing before she sailed."

EN EVANT.

HEAVY and thick the atmosphere,
The prospect narrow, dark, severe;
Yet a few steps the path is clear,—
For those few steps, march on!

Dark rocks that frown as if in wrath,
Like giants ranged across the path;
Be sure the gorge some outlet hath,
So trustfully march on!

A deep wide stream that shines like glass,
Flanked by steep banks of slippery grass;
There is some bridge by which to pass,
So trustfully march on!

A tempest rattling in the wind,
The sun in thunder robes enshrined;

Doubt not some shelter soon to find,
Still hopefully march on!

The day goes out, the fog upcrowds,
Darkness the face of heaven enshrouds;
A voice shall guide thee through the clouds,
So patiently march on!

If duty set you on the way,
You need not fear, you must not stay;
Still faithfully her word obey,
Still loyally march on!

Let but your aims be high and true,
Your spirit firm, but patient, too;
A Titan's strength shall go with you,
Still fearlessly march on!

A BOND OF FRIENDSHIP.

BY CARRIE D. BEEBE.

SOPHIE DAYTON stood in Mrs. Tremaine's cosy back parlor removing her hat and gloves before the pier glass. She had done a very bold thing in coming to live with Mrs. Tremaine, she told herself, as she loosened the matted crimps of her front hair; and so, in truth, she had.

She was an orphan, with a neat little income of fifteen hundred a year; and, as she was in no special need of charity, she had two homes offered her from which to make her selection. One was from her uncle, Mr. Rayne, and the other from Mrs. Tremaine, a widow of only a year's standing, whose husband had been, with Mr. Rayne, co-executor of Mr. Dayton's will.

Sophie's father had once been very poor, and his money was mostly made by one or two profitable speculations. He would in all probability have lost it again, for he was a very credulous man, had he not died suddenly. He had warning enough, however, to make his will, and appoint honest men to execute it, who safely invested his funds for his only child. Sophie was placed at a quiet boarding-school, where she remained until the opening of my story.

She was rather pretty, and a fun-loving girl, causing her teachers much inward vexation of spirit. She would rather per-

petrate some piece of mischief than learn a lesson, any day; and yet, with all her wildness, they could not help loving her, for she was warm-hearted, generous and impulsive. Her propensity for mischief interfered, in some degree, with her studies, and she did not graduate until she was nineteen.

She had always spent her vacation at Melville, where her uncle and Mrs. Tremaine resided. She seemed perfectly at home with either; but when she was about to leave school permanently, it was difficult to decide which place to choose.

She had a cousin, Julia Rayne, with whom she could never agree. Her aunt, of course, thought Julia always in the right, and not, perhaps, without sufficient reason; for, as Julia was of rather a jealous disposition, Sophie was delighted to tease her from morning until night. But then there was Cousin Charley, Julia's brother, who was very fond of Sophie in a brotherly way, and always her firm friend. Her uncle, too, was very kind, and her younger cousins loved her devotedly.

But Mrs. Tremaine had always been so good to her, almost like a mother. She allowed her a great deal of liberty, and yet checked her always when she thought it proper to do so. Sophie knew she would be

happier with Mrs. Tremaine, but there was one drawback, even here, to her perfect happiness.

Mrs Tremaine had a son Willard, her only child. He was a few years older than Sophie, very devoted to his business, and rather grave in manner. Sophie fancied he disliked her, and she was not far from right. But then, he played the lover to Julia Rayne in a quiet, matter-of-fact way for two or three years, and as for Julia, she could never speak of Sophie for five minutes without deploring her wiliness and artfulness; so it was not to be wondered at that Willard should think Sophie rather disagreeable.

Sophie understood something of this, and felt a little forlorn as she stood in the parlor that summer afternoon, waiting for Mrs. Tremaine to come down. But when that lady appeared, and kissed her in a sincere and motherly way, and told her she was very glad to have her with her, Sophie's fears began to vanish like the dew before the sun.

"You don't think I did wrong in accepting your invitation?" she asked. "I—I'm sure I shall be happier here, and then Aunt Rachel has three daughters, you know."

Here she paused, not knowing what else to say. She did not wish to defame her aunt or cousin, so she concluded it was better to leave her logic a little unsound than to say what she might be sorry for afterward. Mrs. Tremaine seemed to understand her.

"Yes, my dear, I know," she said, with an approving nod. "Your aunt has three daughters, and I have none. She doesn't need you, and I do. So the matter is settled, very satisfactorily, I think."

Sophie went to her room with a light heart. Willard was absent for a few days; she was glad of that. She would become accustomed to her home before he returned, and then she was sure she wouldn't mind him if he was moody.

The next day, however, her serenity was disturbed by a visit from Julia.

"Everyone is astonished at your coming here," she said to Sophie, as soon as they were alone. "It looks so strange, you know, when we are living in the same town."

"How is it strange?" asked Sophie, innocently, opening her eyes.

"Why, it looks as though you were trying to catch Willard Tremaine for a husband," proclaimed Julia, in a severe tone.

"Does it?" asked Sophie, with a comical smile. "Who says so, Julia, dear?"

"Who?" echoed Julia, hesitating a moment, "Why, *everybody*, of course."

Sophie laughed merrily.

"I heard the same thing," she said. "Or, rather, the same with variations. Instead of everybody's telling you it appeared as though I wished to catch Willard, I heard that you told it to everybody."

"For shame!" cried Julia.

"Exactly what they said, my dear—it was a shame for you to do so."

"I wish people would mind their own affairs," said Julia, sharply.

"And so do I," responded Sophie, looking toward her cousin very pointedly.

Julia began to feel very uncomfortable. She was not really bad at heart, but she was always jealous of Sophie in everything; and she had long regarded Willard as her own especial property who would in due time propose and marry her. She had intended to give Sophie a long lecture upon the subject of her general delinquency, and had come, brimful of wrath at what she termed her boldness. But Sophie had disarmed her at the first thrust. So, making her call as short as possible, she took her leave.

When she was gone, Sophie sat down and pondered the subject deeply for a few moments.

"Of course," she thought, "Julia will tell Willard her version of the story, and he will believe her. That would make him more arrogant, if possible, than ever, and that is entirely unnecessary. I wouldn't care, only, as I am to live here, I would rather be friendly with him for his mother's sake."

So she fully determined to speak to the gentleman upon the subject as soon after his return as a favorable opportunity offered, and assure him that his friendship was all that she desired.

Now this was quite a bold move, and one which only an experienced coquette could have carried out with good effect. But Sophie was very impulsive; and, though she dreaded the undertaking, she was very sanguine as to a favorable result; so she dismissed the matter without much further thought.

A few evenings after, Willard Tremaine returned. Sophie resolved to keep her room for that evening, and allow him opportunity for a quiet chat with his mother. But not many moments after his arrival her

Aunt Rachel and her Cousin Julia were announced, and she was obliged to go down into the parlor to meet them.

She gave Willard only a careless greeting, and received her aunt's reproaches for refusing to live with them, which seemed half in jest, half in earnest, in a very quiet way. Julia was asked for a song, and sang something overwrought and sentimental. Sophie's turn came next, and she recklessly dashed off a wild, gay ballad, by way of contrast.

Of course Willard accompanied Julia and her mother home, and listened to Mrs. Rayne's lamentations because Sophie was such a child, and had not graduated two years before; adding that, as it was, her education was entirely superficial. Julia hoped people would not ascribe any selfish motives to Sophie for going to live with Mrs. Tremaine, and Willard bade them good-night, with the idea that Sophie must be a consummate piece of artfulness.

Next evening, as he sat quietly smoking his cigar upon the back porch at sunset, some one came quietly out and took a seat near him. He looked up, and beheld a pretty and slightly embarrassed young lady.

"Now for some brilliant acting!" he thought.

Sophie scarcely knew what to say first. She settled the skirts of her pretty white dress, and twisted the ends of her pink sash nervously.

"I wonder if she is going to propose?" was Willard's ill-natured mental query.

"Mr. Tremaine," she began, softly, "I—I've observed that you seem to dislike and distrust me. I would never have dreamed of the reason, if Cousin Julia had not informed me. She said everyone would think I was trying to win you for a husband. If I had known it before I came here to live, I should have acted differently, of course. But, since I am here, I intend to remain as long as your mother desires me to do so. Now, I don't wish to annoy you in any way, for I wish to be your friend. I came down to tell you so."

If a sudden earthquake had turned the earth up and the sky down, Willard Tremaine could not very well have been more astonished than he was now. He listened attentively to each word as she uttered it, wondering what would come next.

"Well?" he said, with an incredulous smile, as she paused.

Sophie felt as though she would like to box his ears. But she managed to maintain a tolerable degree of composure.

"Why, of course," she answered, innocently, "I would like your friendship in return."

"Oh!" he said, as if startled with a new idea. "You wish to establish a bond of friendship between us? Here is a pencil. If you will make a rough draft of it, I will have it copied upon parchment, and duly signed and sealed."

"I don't think that will be necessary," Sophie responded, biting her lips to hide her vexation. "If we only understand each other, it is all that is needed."

"Well, I think we do," he remarked, reflectively. "You wish me to understand that you don't contemplate any entangling matrimonial alliances at present?"

Sophie nodded, and rose from her seat all smiles and self-possession.

"You are right," she said, sweetly. "A husband is the last thing in the world that I desire. But, even if I did wish for one, I'm very sure I shouldn't want you!"

She swept into the house, leaving Willard with the impression that half had not been told him.

"Of all artful subterfuges," he said "this is the boldest that ever came to my knowledge! Julia needn't call her childish, hereafter."

Sophie went up to her room feeling that she had been thoroughly misunderstood. She could have cried at the failure of her experiment, only she was too vexed for that.

"Never mind!" she said, wrathfully. "I'll bring him to terms yet. I think I understand him now quite as well as he does me."

Next morning, when Willard came downstairs, Sophie was just returning from a walk. She wore a pair of thick but neat boots, a well-fitting suit, and a most becoming hat. She carried in her hand a bouquet of fresh wild flowers, and her cheeks were flushed with exercise. He watched her as she went up to kiss his mother good-morning, and came to the conclusion that she was pretty and graceful, to say the least. Thinking further upon the subject, he wondered why his mother never discovered the petty foibles in her disposition that Julia was so constantly harping upon.

That evening, when he took a cigar for his usual smoke upon the porch, he fully

expected that Sophie would present herself with another problem to solve, and he began to feel like a martyr as he pictured her breaking up all his bachelor reveries, and practicing her arts for his benefit.

He waited until past his usual hour, hoping she would come, for he was quite willing to play martyr for the sake of having her appear ridiculous, but she did not come. He rose, at last, and went into the parlor. Through the front windows he saw Sophie, tastefully attired, and chatting gayly with her cousin, Charley Rayne.

Quite disgusted, he went out for a walk in the garden, and when he returned, he found Sophie in his mother's room, reading aloud from a popular magazine. He paused a moment at the door.

"Come in, Willard," his mother said, "and hear this story; Sophie has only just commenced it."

He seemed to hesitate for a moment, hoping Sophie would second the invitation, but she did not. So he went in and took a seat. Sophie went quietly on with her reading, seeming to ignore him completely. She had a sweet voice, and she read more than well. Willard became interested in both the reader and the story.

"Thank you, dear," Mrs. Tremaine said, when she had finished. "My eyes are growing dim, and soon tire. To be able to read well is a very desirable accomplishment, in my estimation. I think it preferable to many that young ladies acquire in these days. If you are not weary, I wish you would read me the local news of the village paper which came to-night."

Sophie took it, with the remark that she was very glad to be able to confer so slight a favor, and at once dipped into the news. The very last item, and in conspicuous characters, was an announcement of a picnic which was to be held two days later, in a grove near the village.

"That will be very pleasant," said Mrs. Tremaine. "You will attend, with Sophie, of course," she observed to Willard.

"I—in truth, mother," he began, evidently greatly annoyed at the request, "I fear I am already engaged for Thursday. I'm very sorry indeed, but"—

"You ought to consult my wishes in some degree," his mother returned, in a vexed tone. "Even if you are engaged, I cannot see why that would interfere with your escorting Sophie also."

"It would give me great pleasure to do so, as far as I myself am concerned," he answered; looking toward Sophie as though he expected her to decline and relieve him from his embarrassment. But she did nothing of the kind. She sat coolly watching the drift of the conversation, and, as Willard looked up, she quietly helped herself to a drink of ice-water.

The truth was, he was not engaged to take anyone to the picnic. He expected to escort Julia, of course, but had been quite busy during the day, and had not asked her, for he supposed she would prepare to go with her brother, at any rate, and he could speak of it at the last moment. But he did not wish either his mother or Sophie to think he was going to play the devotee to Sophie constantly. After thinking the matter over, he came to the conclusion that he ought to invite her this time, after all that had been said.

Just then she rose to go to her room. She bade them good-night, but Willard called her back.

"Miss Sophie!"

She turned quietly.

"If you will consent to attend the picnic with me in company with another lady, I shall be very glad to escort you."

He spoke apologetically, for he felt quite ashamed of himself, even though he thought she might have had the delicacy to decline.

"Thank you," Sophie answered, quietly. "I shouldn't have the slightest objection to accompany you with another lady, if I were not already engaged to attend the picnic with another gentleman. Under the circumstances, you will perceive it is necessary for me to decline your very polite invitation, however much I may regret that I am compelled to do so. Good-night."

Mrs. Tremaine laughed merrily as Sophie left the room. The girl looked so demure as she declined to go, as though it were really a great trial for her to refuse, that the whole thing appeared extremely absurd. Willard laughed, too, though at his own expense.

Next day Willard went early to call upon Julia, and engage for her to accompany him to the picnic.

"Why, Willard," she said, "we have talked of it so long, and I did not suppose you would be home in time, and so I"—

"Well, what?" he asked, beginning to grow impatient.

"I promised James Lewis to attend the picnic with him. But you must go, too, she added, seeing he looked rather blank. "Why don't you take Sophie?"

"Sophie is already engaged to go with some one else," he replied, unguardedly.

"How do you know?"

"Because I asked—she told me so."

"So you invited Sophie to go with you first?" Julia exclaimed, angrily.

He was obliged to confess that he had. He tried to explain, but she would not listen. Finding it no use to expostulate with her, he left in an unenviable frame of mind. He had felt an affection for Julia for a long time, and always fancied her very gentle and amiable. He would not have cared so much for the disappointment about the picnic, but he began to fear that her temper was not of the pleasantest kind when aroused.

Besides this, he knew that he would appear ridiculous in Sophie's eyes if he attended the picnic alone. He fancied that she was going with her Cousin Charley, and it was quite probable she knew that James Lewis was to act as Julia's escort. He could not go from house to house throughout the village in search of a lady, for in all probability they were engaged before this time, and he did not wish to give the affair greater publicity.

In his perplexity he called upon Charley Rayne, and asked his assistance. Charley had the whole story from Sophie, who charged him, on penalty of her most severe displeasure, to refrain from giving any help or advice in the case. But Willard was really a favorite of Charley's, and as he did not stand in awe of Sophie's displeasure, he relented as soon as he heard the doleful account which Willard gave of the affair.

"Never mind," he said, "I'm going to take two ladies, and I am sure I can persuade one of them to accompany you. Sophie, sister Kate and I were going together, but if you care to act as Kate's escort, I don't doubt she would willingly consent to it."

Willard felt relieved. Kate was only a schoolgirl, but as the families were very intimate, nothing would be thought of it. Charlie set out for home, to make sure of the thing at once, and met Kate and Sophie on the way. He explained his mission, and both girls laughed merrily.

"Julia is in hysterics, because Willard

asked her second," laughed Kate, "so of course I am number three. I guess I'll decline with thanks."

"No, Kate," said Sophie, "you must accept at once. If you will, and will agree to torment him, and give him all the trouble you can, I'll give you my new pink sash and slippers you admired so much, to wear to-morrow."

Kate promised; and although Charley declared it was hardly fair, he was obliged to consent and say nothing about it.

Quite early next morning Julia and Mr. Lewis set out for the grounds, for they were both on the committee of arrangements. About an hour afterward Charley called for Sophie, who came down in a pretty white dress, looped up with natural-looking deep golden butterflies instead of the usual knots of ribbon. She sprang lightly into the carriage, wishing Willard, who stood upon the porch, a very pleasant day.

He set out to meet Kate directly after, but was somewhat annoyed to find she was not ready. The day was warm, and he was anxious to reach the shaded grove. But his horses were very restive, and he concluded to wait for Kate in the carriage. After sitting in the boiling sun for nearly half an hour, he adjourned to the parlor. She came down immediately after, and offered an apology for her tardiness in so sincere a manner that he was ashamed for having been vexed by it.

They entered the carriage, but had not proceeded far before Kate discovered that she had forgotten her handkerchief. She deplored the loss of it in so pathetic a manner that he was obliged to return for it. This occasioned considerable delay, for Willard was obliged to wait a few moments longer. They reached the grounds at last just as Willard was nearly overcome by the heat of the sun, and his patience almost exhausted.

Kate seemed as fresh as ever, and at once instituted a search for Sophie. She was found at length, comfortably settled in a seat which nature had formed by dividing the trunks of a large maple tree into two main branches near the ground. Charley sat upon a rock opposite; both looked cool and cosey as possible, and were chatting merrily.

Kate took a seat near her brother, and Willard threw himself upon the ground near, tossed aside his hat, and wiped the

perspiration from his brow. Kate began at once to relate their mishaps.

"It's so fearfully warm, too," she said, at the close. "And I forgot to bring my fan. I'm so careless! Julia scolds me for it every day. She never forgets anything."

"You don't need a fan in the open air," said Charley, seeing a vexed look pass over Willard's face. "It would be an insult to 'the gentle breezes' to use one."

"I hope, Kate," said Sophie, "you don't intend to send Mr. Tremaine back for your fan, also?"

"Oh, no! I hadn't thought of such a thing. But I really would like a glass of water."

Willard dutifully rose, and set out in quest of one. He found James Lewis and Julia engaged in making the lemonade, and conversing over it in a delightfully confidential manner.

"Could I obtain a glass of water for a lady?" he asked, a little stiffly.

"There isn't a single glass to spare," returned Julia, sharply.

"But I will return it immediately," he said.

"Very well, you may take the water, but every particle of ice will be needed for the lemonade."

He thanked her in rather a brusque way, poured out the water and carried it to Kate, who drank it with a wry face, though she made no remark.

Throughout the day she succeeded in making him feel as uncomfortable as possible. She did not seem conscious of the fact, but was sweetly oblivious as far as his ease or feelings were concerned; and he felt greatly relieved when the day was over.

When he reached home, Sophie was playing upon the piano. He stepped upon the balcony and sat down to listen unobserved. She did not seem to pay much attention to her music, but played a number of dreamy old airs with a careless touch which gave the notes a soothing, restful sound. At last she rose, and, closing the piano, turned to leave the room. Willard stepped through the open window, and thanked her for the music.

"I believe I have been unjust in my feelings towards you," Miss Sophie," he said, apologetically. "If you will pardon my past ill-nature, I will promise to be more friendly in future. I feel very humble, after to-day's experience."

Sophie was for the moment disarmed, and

obeying the first impulse, began to explain.

"If you have been annoyed to-day, Mr. Tremaine," she said, quickly, and blushing up to her forehead, "it was all my fault, for I bribed Kate to torment you. It was not lady-like, I confess, but it is true."

Willard gazed upon her in astonishment for a moment, then burst into a loud laugh.

"Miss Sophie," he said at last, "I am going to pay you a rare compliment. You are, in my estimation, the most honest and courageous young lady of my acquaintance. I hope you repent having caused me so much trouble to-day, for it was not a strictly friendly act on your part."

"On the contrary," she answered, looking him full in the face, "I'm very glad I did it."

He had the advantage, now, for she was very angry.

"Why?" he asked, quietly, and quite sure, for the first time, that she had not the slightest designs upon him, as far as love or matrimony was concerned.

"Because," she returned, speaking very fast, and opening her eyes wider to keep the tears from dropping over her cheeks, "when your mother invited me to make her house my home, you were not just enough to tell me my presence was disagreeable to you, but waited for me to learn the fact through your unkind actions. I thoughtlessly asked you to be my friend—that is the only thing I regret in the whole matter—you assented in words, but acted the part of an enemy."

"That is strictly true," he replied, still in a low tone. "I am truly sorry for it. I fancied it would annoy me to have you here, but I find that I have wronged you, for you have brought sunshine into the house. Won't you forgive me, Sophie, and be my friend in the future?"

"I don't want to forgive you," she said, perversely, and choking back a sob, "or rather, I'm so wicked I cannot do it."

"You don't look very wicked," he smiled, and at that moment Mrs. Tremaine came down the staircase.

Sophie turned quickly, and gave him her hand. Then with an excuse to his mother that she was tired, she rushed up-stairs to her room.

The summer passed away. Sophie had been as demure as a kitten in Willard's presence, ever since the night after the picnic. She never tried to annoy him, except

in receiving all his advances quietly, as though they were to be expected in a friend. She was more cautious, too, in conversation, so much so, that even her aunt and cousin Julia could find no fault with her unguarded remarks. Julia was rather stiff in her manner toward Willard, who seldom called at the house now. The two families, feeling dissatisfied with themselves and each other, fell back upon a show of over-politeness. Sophie chafed under the rein she had put upon herself, and began to feel wonderfully lonesome and desolate.

"Oh!" she sighed, one day to herself, "I wonder how girls feel who have homes of their own to go to when their schooldays are over? I didn't expect to be perfectly happy here, I'm sure, but it is even worse than I thought."

After considering the matter for some time, she determined to pack her trunk and go back to school. She knew she was a favorite with the lady principal, and that she would receive her for another year at least, and she could keep up her music as a pretence. Even this didn't look very inviting to her. How could she leave Mrs. Tremaine, who had been so kind to her—almost like her mother? And how could she—

Here she stopped short, and rushing down stairs she commenced a vigorous practicing upon the piano of what she called her "hyena pieces;" and never pausing until she was thoroughly wearied with the tiresome finger exercises. Willard came into the room just as she was finishing.

"I'm taking my last practice," she said, with some of her old recklessness of manner, "for to-morrow I'm going away."

"For how long?" he asked, with something of surprise in his tone.

"Forever!"

"Why?"

"Your usual question," she retorted. "I haven't yet appointed you my confessor."

"Then I will appoint you mine," he answered. "I don't wish you to go away, Sophie; do you know why?"

"I was never good at guessing, and I don't think it worth while to try now," she said, her cheeks aflame with blushes, but trying to look defiant still.

"I love you," he said, "That is the reason."

"I don't believe it!" she said.

He appeared puzzled for a moment.

"Really," he said at last, "the manner in which you receive a declaration of love is novel, to say the least."

"How can you make love to me when there is a bond of friendship existing between us?" she asked.

"Do be serious for one moment, Sophie," he said, coaxingly. "I do love you, and, as I am a determined man, I shall convince you of the truth of what I say."

Sophie began to be frightened, and Willard, thinking by her silence that she had begun to relent, came and took her hands in his.

"If you don't believe me," he said, "look in my face and see whether I am speaking the truth or not."

Sophie essayed one glance. He did look very much in earnest.

"Will you be my wife, Sophie, and stay here with us, instead of going away forever?"

"But you are so cross," she answered, hesitatingly.

"Have I been so lately? I think you could afford to forgive me for my rudeness at first, for you have punished me so long. Come, Sophie, be generous, and say I have not been cross once since the night after the picnic."

"But I've been very lonesome since then."

"Because you would insist upon sitting alone in your room every evening, instead of spending it here with me. I have been lonely too. Won't you try to love me? I believe I could make you happy, if you only would."

"I thought you were engaged to Cousin Julia."

"Now Sophie, dear, if you are jealous of Julia, I shall know you love me. I was never engaged to her, though I did fancy her at one time. I'm very sure I do not now."

"She'll say I came here on purpose to win you for a husband. And everybody else will say it, too."

"But you know better, dear, and so do I. And we won't care so much what other people say, if we are satisfied ourselves."

So Sophie assented. Mrs. Tremaine was delighted, and even Cousin Julia offered her congratulations unmingled with a single unkind word. As for Sophie, she is one of the happiest, merriest little wives in the world.

A PEDAGOGICAL ROASTING.

I AM now about to gratify a long contemplated plan of revenge for a cruel outrage perpetrated upon me about seven years ago by a male and female teacher. They roasted me alive in their school-house.

At that time I had just assumed the pedagogical charge of a flock of fifty or sixty juveniles in a small mining town of one of the southern counties. Having had some previous experience in herding cattle, I was in a measure prepared for the task. California children at that period, and in that locality, were very wild. I was also wild. For years previous I had been leading a nomadic mining life; a life that put away and made strange to me such things as pertain to a civilized and domestic existence.

It was hot work controlling the flock placed in my hands. School-teaching, with the thermometer at one hundred and upward, will bring all the irritability in a person's nature to the surface. But that is nothing compared with being roasted alive in a school-house by pedantic fiends.

So much difficulty did I experience in the management of my school, that I determined to visit an educational institution in a larger town a few miles distant, in order to gather, if possible, a few ideas on school discipline. I walked to the place. I walked into the seminary of brick and brains, perched on a high, hot hill with a small graveyard on one side and an unoccupied dwelling-house on the other, whose shivered windows bore striking testimony to the accuracy with which the juveniles had taught themselves to throw stones. I walked in just as the pedantical foundry had commenced operations for the afternoon. I explained my errand to the male roaster. He welcomed me heartily to his educational oven, and, instead of allowing me to occupy a quiet corner, as I wished, bore me up to the teacher's platform and seated me in an arm-chair in full view of the whole school.

At that time I was a victim of constitutional embarrassment. I was just out of the woods. Ranged along at the front desks were some fifteen or twenty young ladies, who by this time are wives and mothers—or should be. I do not wish to say that they

stared at me. But they certainly looked that way very hard. And their glances at each other were expressive of the idea "What's that?" Perhaps my appearance justified the inquiry.

Behind the young ladies, sat the boys, large and small. Among them were facetious urchins, who, when the teacher's back was turned, grinned at me and threw spit-balls at each other.

Mr. A., the gentleman in charge of the roasting department then proceeded to inflict further torture by informing the pupils in a very loud voice that I was "a teacher, a famous teacher, from a neighboring town," who had visited them in order to see what proficiency they had made in their studies.

When I heard Mr. A. make the remark about a "famous teacher," I knew his designs on me. I saw spread out before me, for that afternoon, an eternity of misery. I was not a famous teacher. I came simply as a humble disciple, desiring to sit at his feet and learn pedagogical wisdom. I wanted to sit, unobserved, in a corner. But I was not allowed to learn in my own way, in a corner. I was rushed up on that platform and represented as a brilliant pedantical light, when I scarcely knew the alphabet of the art of teaching.

Why was this? Why was I so over-praised? I know, now. Mr. A. was a thorough school-master. It was the business of his life. The world does not appreciate school-masters. They suffer from this lack of appreciation. I was a scapegoat from the wicked world that had strayed into that pedagogical pound. I had the presumption to try and be a school-master. He had got me just where he wanted, and it was his intention to make one man aware that neither school-teachers nor their profession are to be regarded lightly.

Mr. and Mrs. A., who had charge of this institution, were also on the county board of examination, for the purpose of determining whether unfortunates, unable any longer to beg, borrow or steal for a living, were fit to teach school. At such times they took a fiendish delight in setting arithmetical, geographical and grammatical traps for the

unwary man or woman who had fallen into their hands. They torture applicants with such questions as "Is is a verb?" "Is it proper to say spoonfulls, or spoonsfull?" "What is a letter?" Then the poor wretch would writhe in endeavoring to give immediate expression to his ideas, and they would sit by and enjoy his misery.

The roaster called up a class in grammar, somewhat advanced. He handed me a book, and requested that I should conduct the recitation. I endeavored to excuse myself. He insisted. I was obliged to refuse, point-blank. The truth was, I was somewhat rusty in grammar, and although conversant with its general principles I could not triumphantly conduct a recitation. In this skillful manner did he to his pupils make me appear a dunce. I, "the famous teacher from a neighboring town!" And I, the while, sat in his arm-chair, and tried to appear dignified, while the facetious urchins grinned at each other, and the young ladies indulged in a faint titter, which the roaster pretended not to hear. The wretch suspended the discipline of his school to enhance my misery. After he had marched the class through their grammatical evolutions, he requested me to make them a few remarks relative to the study in question. I did make a remark, internally. It was of a profane character. Again I tried excuses. They were of no avail. I must say something. I arose. I felt as if I were raising the whole building with me. I said, "Ladies and gentlemen—no, dear children. Grammar is an interesting study," and then they all laughed, and the roaster turned his back and walked away, pretending to look out of a window, and when I came to reflect, as I did, for about ten seconds, over the ridiculousness of the assertion I had made about grammar, I laughed, myself, and sat down.

The grammar class went to their seats seemingly in a joyous frame of mind, leaving me very red and uncomfortable. I thought of many things. I thought of what Tom Riper and a lot of my old mining partners would say and do if they saw me in my present situation.

Then he called up a class in geography. There I thought myself at home. But that dreadful teacher had instructed that class in a miserable theory relative to the precession of the equinoxes, and cunningly managed to draw the recitation in that direction. You see, he was a professional school-teacher,

and they have all these things at their tongue's end. I had not the shadow of an idea regarding the precession of the equinoxes, and it was not long before these small boys and girls knew it. I perspired very freely. The roaster rejoiced internally. I could feel him. Figuratively, he again elevated me before that class as a dunce, who would presume to teach school. Of course he wanted me to make a few remarks to this class. By this time he had completely psychologized me into complete control of his will. Again I arose like an automaton. "My friends," said I. Recollect I had never before spoken to any kind of an audience. "My friends, you have great privileges. When I was a boy"—Then I forgot myself and thought, "O would I were a boy again"—or a rock, or a tree, or a stump, or an ox, or an idiot, anything to be out of this dreadful place. I sat down. The roaster dismissed his class without further remark. I intimated that I thought I had better go. But he wouldn't hear of my departure. He wished me to witness his improved method of teaching infants the alphabet, and calling up a row of imps, he caused them to call aloud together letter after letter. Each infantile shout raised me a couple of inches from my chair.

Finally the roaster wished me to visit the recitation room where the roasteress was conducting the recitation of the most advanced pupils in mathematics. There they had been getting ready a hot fire for me the whole afternoon. I went in. I had now no particle of my own identity left. This class had progressed into compound proportion, or what in other days was termed "the double rule of three."

Here I faced the same array of young ladies, who smiled, not so very sweetly, on me when I made my speech on grammar. As I sat down, the roasteress observed that it was a very hot afternoon, and that the whole school was undergoing a roasting process. She pretended to be advertising to the weather. But I knew what she meant. She put a cursed arithmetic in my unwilling hands. It was open at those unearthly and useless complications of numbers in compound proportion. I had not performed those examples for years. How could I now trace correctly the working of such a mathematical exercise? Nevertheless I faced the music. I looked mathematical wisdom. I propounded two examples. Two fearful,

youthful mathematical geniuses stepped to the board. They covered it with figures. I knew not whether they added, subtracted, multiplied or divided. Neither did I care. I threw all my energies into the expression of my face. They finished and turned to me. I pronounced it correct. I knew not if they were or not. I complimented them on their proficiency and mathematical skill. The roasteress eyed me doubtfully. So did the pupils. I suppose they imagined that I cropped out with a sort of suspicious brightness in the science of numbers. I didn't care what they imagined. I felt that the

roasting was over. I was done; well done, and by the perspiratory streams pouring over me, I felt basted as well as roasted. They allowed me to depart—me, the “famous teacher from an adjoining town.” The school was dismissed. I went through the mockery of thanking these fiends for the kindness they had shown me. When I crawled away down the hill, I could feel those smart pupils standing in groups at the top gazing with a sort of a pitying contempt on the “famous school-teacher from a neighboring town,”—a wiser, but a very wet and wilted man.

DEATH OF SUMMER.

BY DELL RAY.

SUMMER'S dying in the arms of Autumn,
 Heir to all her wealth he is come,
 And his clear, cold breath
 Is fast chilling her to death;
 And her death is the death of her nurslings,
 All fresh and green growing things.
 Cheerful, sunny-hearted Summer is dying,
 And the flowers wear out their lives in sighing;
 For, no longer nourished on her warm breast,
 They fade and wither and die with the rest.
 But most of all things in the north
 The forest trees her death show forth;
 Far surpassing the dress of living green
 In the glory of their dying robe's sheen.
 As the bright halo gathers about the head
 Of the dying hero on his bed,
 As all beautiful thoughts and feelings are blent
 In contemplating the end of a life well spent,
 So fond Nature, howsoe'er much she grieves
 Infuses all beauty into the dying leaves,
 And its immortal radiance, reflecting is cast
 O'er all Summer's features, and her brightest smile is her last.

BABY ROSE.

BY MASIE PRESTON.

IT was a warm summer afternoon, with just enough breeze to stir the trees and make them rustle with that musical murmur, so pleasant in wooded regions. The scene that the sun lighted up was an unusually fair one, abounding in heath-clad hills, and fertile valleys with fields of waving corn just changing to golden, and rich pasturage, where the large-eyed contented cattle reposed.

The woods were a prominent feature in the scene. On the top of one fern-covered hill, an immense grove spread its branches and stretched along to a great distance, the hill being joined to a second one, over which the forest also extended. At the foot of the nearer hill, surrounded by garden and orchard, stood a handsome dwelling-house. It was not ancient architecture, but there was no unpleasant evidence of newness about it. The grounds were beautifully laid out; and at this season the scent of the roses perfumed all the air.

About five or six years before the present time, the owner of the house, Mr. Mervale, had come with his family to reside there. He had then just been married for the second time. The lady was a beautiful young Jewess, not more than two or three years the senior of her step-daughter. It was said that the marriage had taken place totally against the consent of the young Jewess's friends. However that might be, it seemed a specially happy union. The lady became a convert to the faith of her husband, and no family in the neighborhood was more united. But the happiness was of brief continuance, for she died about a year after leaving an infant daughter. Jessie Mervale undertook the care of the child, and, so far as adoring love and attention went, it never missed the mother it had lost. Miss Mervale had been engaged to be married to a young artist, to whom she was much attached; but she decided that her engagement should wait so long as her little step-sister required her care.

The child was now five years old, and was the darling of the whole family. She was a lovely little girl, with the rich dark complexion of her mother, glossy chestnut curls,

and dewdrop eyes—a merry, laughing, happy little rogue, with dimples in every spot where a dimple could possibly hide, rounded cheeks, and soft chin. She was just the child to be the pet and plaything of an entire household. Mr. Mervale loved his daughter Jessie, and was fond and proud of his sons—rough boisterous schoolboys; but this was “the weeny one.” Her name was Rose, but “Baby Rose” and “the weeny one” were the names she usually went by.

Jessie's artist-lover, Walter Morrison, had requested permission to paint the picture of the beautiful child; and this afternoon had been fixed for baby Rose's first sitting. Jessie brushed the brown curls till the little head shone like a ripe chestnut, and dressed “the weeny one” in a white frock with crimson ribbons; then, opening a casket that was always kept under lock and key, she took out a magnificent diamond necklace, and put it round her little sister's neck. The necklace had been the property of the child's mother, and was of great value, the diamonds being remarkably large and brilliant. Baby Rose had never had it on before, and, wild with delight, she broke from her sister, and ran laughing from the room out into the garden. Jessie followed, but baby Rose was fleet as a young fawn; and, escaping through the garden gate, she bounded up the hill behind the house and into the wood on the top, laughing mischievously and looking back as she ran, till the trees hid her from view.

Jessie knew if she pursued, the little rogue would lead her a chase half-way through the wood before allowing herself to be caught; so she remained at the foot of the hill, thinking that, on finding herself alone in the wood, the child would quickly return. But several minutes went by, and baby Rose did not come back. Jessie was about to follow her up to the wood, when Walter Morrison appeared.

“Oh, she has doubtless discovered a clump of summer violets, or some such treasure,” he said, “and is busy gathering them for the further decoration of her little person! She will return in her own good time. Everybody in the place knows and

loves baby Rose, and she would be safe if she had on her the riches of the Indies. But she is not likely to meet any living thing up there except rabbits and birds."

But, when they had waited a little longer, Jessie began to be uneasy. Though the child was generally allowed a good deal of freedom, she did not like the idea of her running wild through the wood with that valuable necklace on, and already she vaguely regretted the vanity that had led her to decorate the child so unsuitably. They went up the hill and into the wood.

On entering it, there was no sign of baby Rose; but, if she had run straight on, she would be far out of their sight by this time. Two paths diverged before them. They took the broader of the two, and walked on, Jessie expecting every moment to hear the merry laugh or childish shout, as she sprang out upon them from some leafy hiding-place. Morrison, happy to be alone with Jessie and in the midst of such a charming scene, soon introduced the subject always nearest his heart.

"Baby Rose will soon now no more be baby to require your care," he said, "and then, Jessie, you will no longer have any excuse for shirking that more troublesome charge—myself."

"Excuse! Well, I won't contradict your calling yourself a troublesome charge; but do you think it was an excuse and not a reason that made me lengthen our engagement?"

"No, Jessie; I know well that it was a reason—a noble reason—that led you to do so, and I can't help honoring you for it, though, all the same, it was a little hard on me. But I would gladly wait twice as long, and three times—yes, half my life—if I thought I had the faintest chance of winning you at last; for my Jessie is worth waiting for."

Thus conversing, the time sped rapidly, and they forgot to wonder that they had not yet come upon the little fugitive.

Meanwhile baby Rose, had taken the other path, ran through the wood—now pausing to gather a flower and fasten it in her hair, now clapping her hands as a rabbit or a squirrel darted across her path. Soon she became absorbed in the pursuit of a gorgeous butterfly, and, as she sprang after it, her white dress and colored ribbons fluttering in the breeze, the diamond necklace shooting forth all manner of colors, she

looked like another butterfly of a larger and more brilliant species. In the excitement of the pursuit every thought of Jessie was completely forgotten. She had reached about the middle of the wood, when the butterfly, to elude its pursuer, flew among some bushes that clustered thickly together, and fastened on a wild rose. But the child was not to be balked. Heedless of her muslin dress, she ran in among the brambles and thick growth of underwood. The next moment a sudden cry of affright rang shrilly through the wood, and no more was seen of baby Rose.

"Listen!" said Jessie, stopping and laying her hand on her companion's arm. "Did you not hear a cry?"

"It was only a bird," replied Morrison. "You may be sure that baby Rose is safe at home by this time."

"Then let us go back," said Jessie.

The return walk was somewhat silent. Jessie felt even a greater anxiety than she could reasonably account for, and she walked on rapidly till they reached the house.

"Where is the child?" she asked one of her brothers whom she met at the garden gate. "Hasn't baby Rose come back?"

"Come back!" he repeated. "No; I was just going to ask why she wasn't with you. We've all been wondering why you stayed so long in the wood, and regretting that Morrison was letting the daylight go without beginning the picture."

"Then where can my weeny one be?" exclaimed Jessie, turning pale.

And this question no one in the house could answer. Thoroughly alarmed, Morrison and Jessie again set out for the wood to explore the other path, Mr. Mervale, who was very uneasy for the safety of his darling, and Jessie's two brothers joining them. But all in vain they searched through the wood and called again and again the name of baby Rose. Not a spot did they leave unexplored as they passed along; not a bush escaped being looked behind, or a clump of long ferns examined, lest the child might have fallen asleep among them.

As the searchers proceeded and entered that part of the wood which extended over the second hill, and was called the "Great Grove," the other being the "Little Grove," all regular paths disappeared. The ground became rough, being tangled with long brambles stretching across and covered by little hillocks that made it most laborious

walking. The dusk was now rapidly falling, and the wood was filled with dim shadows. During the intervals that the searchers ceased to call the child's name, the melancholy silence was broken only by the whispering echoes, the squeak of a rabbit as, startled by their approach, it ran to its burrow, the occasional note of a bird, and the twittering of wings among the branches.

Morrison perceived that, between distress of mind and fatigue, Jessie was almost overcome; but she would not listen to him when he urged her to let him take her home.

"I've an ideal" suddenly exclaimed one of the boys. "Let us go to the ruin and see if the old man who lives in it can tell us anything. How do we know but baby Rose may be there all this time, or, at least, he may have seen her?"

The suggestion was at once acted upon, and, turning somewhat aside, the party soon came in sight of a curious old ruin, which appeared to be a remnant of some castle of ancient times.

A few months before an old man had taken up his abode in this place. Nobody knew anything about him; and he hardly ever came down from the hill where, wrapt round by the thick wood, he lived like some hermit or pious monk of old times. For want of any other name people called him the old man of the wood. As they approached nearer, the occupant of the ruin came out—a tall, old man, with a flowing white beard and somewhat striking and peculiar countenance, but poorly and coarsely clad.

Yes, he had seen such a child, he said—had noticed the necklace, too, and thought that her nurse or mother could not be far behind. In reply to further questions he indicated the direction he had seen her take, and which led them to suppose that she must have strayed out of the wood into the country beyond, and completely lost her way.

Mr. Mervale now joined Morrison insisting that Jessie should return home, for they proposed to increase their numbers from a neighboring farm-house, and with lights to continue the search, parties going in various directions. Jessie was obliged to consent. An hour after hour she sat and waited in a state of sickening anxiety, to which she would have preferred any amount of physical suffering.

It was nearly morning when at length they came. As she heard them approach,

her heart sank, for their slow steps and silence seemed to tell her that they were unsuccessful. And it was even so. Next day, and each day following, the search was renewed, the old man of the wood, who seemed anxious to give any assistance he could, setting them on various tracks. But all in vain. The days grew into weeks, and still nothing was heard of the missing child.

Mr. Mervale was almost distracted, and Jessie broken-hearted. An unusual silence prevailed in the house. Even the boisterous spirits of the boys were subdued, and they went about quietly. And not only the immediate household, but all the neighborhood missed the merry, beautiful child, and mourned for her. Walter Morrison tried to soothe Jessie, but, when he spoke to her of his love, her only reply was:—

"Find my weeny one."

He left the place, and, following up different clews, or what seemed to be clews, untiringly prosecuted the search. He had been absent about six months, when a rumor reached him that the wood which baby Rose had been lost in was haunted, and it was said that a white figure walked there at night. In order to discover what such a report might mean, he turned to that part of the country. It was some time since he had heard from any of the family, for, as he went about quickly from place to place, no regular correspondence was kept up.

As he came to the turn of the road where the Mervales' house appeared in sight, it struck him as having a strangely melancholy look, different from formerly. Drawing near, he saw that the shutters were closed; grass and weeds had sprung up in the pathway; all the summer flowers were dead, and no autumn ones were blooming in their stead. It looked like an uninhabited house. On inquiring, he was told that the family had gone away some time before, and that Jessie had lost her reason, and used to wander in the wood at night, looking for her "weeny one," and calling the name of the child.

Twelve years went by. On a bright spring morning a gentleman was walking along the road on the side of which rose the wood-crowned hill. His countenance was grave and thoughtful, and deeply marked with melancholy; and, though he seemed to be only of middle age, his hair and beard were plentifully sprinkled with silver. In

this grave sorrowful-looking man few would have recognized the young artist, Walter Morrison; yet it was he. His eyes rested with a bewildered gaze on the scene before him. The house where the Mervales had dwelt was no longer there; but on the hill above, in a cleared space of the wood, covering the spot where the old ruin had formerly stood, rose a stately mansion, its white front, relieved against the dark wood behind and around, gleaming in the sun.

To this house Morrison was bound, being called thither to fulfill an artistic engagement. He had been abroad for many years, having gone to Rome to study in its galleries that art which was the only source of consolation remaining to him. He had attained to rare and great skill as a copyist of the old masters, and become celebrated. A few days before he had received a letter from a gentleman, requesting him to come to his house for the purpose of taking a copy of a very old picture in his possession. At first Morrison had felt reluctant to return to the spot he had once loved so well; but there was also a certain attraction for him in the idea of seeing it again, and he decided to go. The name of the gentleman—Abraham—showed that he was a Jew; and Morrison had heard that he was possessed of enormous wealth, and that he was striving to acquire more.

The appearance of the house inside seemed to prove the truth of the rumor. It was furnished in a most costly and magnificent style, and great state appeared to be kept up.

On being admitted, Morrison was at once shown into the presence of Mr. Abraham. He was an old man, apparently about sixty-six years of age, with a truly Jewish countenance and flowing patriarchal beard; but the benevolence this might have imparted to his aspect was marred by the stern gleam of the still piercing gray eyes.

As he rose to greet his guest, a strange vague feeling came over Morrison, as if somewhere before, under totally different circumstances, he had seen that face and heard that voice. He tried to recollect when and where, but was quite unable. This peculiar tormenting feeling, and his efforts to analyze it, gave an absence to his manner while conversing with the old man, who seemed to notice it, and from time to time looked at him keenly, and then was silent, as if meditating.

As it wanted but a short time to the dinner hour, Morrison was soon shown to his room. When there, he again tried to account for the strange feeling, as of familiarity, that had taken possession of him on entering the presence of the Jewish gentleman, but without any better success than before.

When he re-entered the drawing-room, two young girls were present, whom Mr. Abraham introduced as his granddaughters Rebekah and Ruth. From the face of the former, who seemed to be about a year the senior of the other, the artist found it almost impossible to withdraw his eyes, it was a countenance so radiant in beauty. Masses of rich chestnut-brown hair, gathered together with a ribbon, fell in thick loose curls behind. Her eyes were like stars, so bright and sparkling that it was difficult to define their color. Her complexion was exquisitely fair, with a peachy bloom on the rounded cheeks, and dimples peeped out about the corners of the beautifully shaped little mouth. Her figure was the very personification of grace, slender, yet with more fullness than usual at her age.

Gazing on the beautiful vision, Morrison took hardly any notice of the other young girl, who was small and quiet, with a settled gravity of expression. Beside her companion she looked quite unimportant, and no one would have thought of noticing her while Rebekah was by.

Yet it was to Ruth that the old man talked, although she seemed timid and almost afraid of him, and replied only in monosyllables, while Rebekah did her best to please him with winning ways, meeting in return either silence or a frown at her sallies. It was evident to Morrison that, whatever was the cause, Ruth was her grandfather's favorite, while he seemed actually to dislike the beautiful and engaging Rebekah.

The artist and Rebekah soon became very good friends. She would frequently come into the picture-gallery while he painted, and stand by watching him. She seemed to feel very much the loneliness of her life, and often complained to him of it; for Mr. Abraham, despite his great wealth and the splendor of his abode, scarcely ever saw any company, and had made no friends among the families in the neighborhood.

"I would give anything to get away from this place," Rebekah said one day. "I do

not feel as if it were my home. Even you, a stranger, must see that my grandfather only tolerates my presence, and that he bestows all his favor on my cousin Ruth."

"I certainly could not help observing it, and wondering at the way that he treats your cousin," returned Morrison.

"Yes; and and I will tell you the reason of the difference. Ruth is the child of his son who married according to his wishes, but I am the child of his daughter who, against the consent of her family, wedded a Christian gentleman, and became a Christian herself. So you see that I am only half a Jewess—and that is why he hates me. I know well, although I try to please him, that he will leave all his wealth to Ruth, and that I shall be penniless after his death, and obliged to earn my bread."

Morrison was silent. He had ceased to paint, and now sat wrapt in deep thought.

In a few minutes he looked up, and, fixing his eyes intently on Rebekah's fair face, murmured:—

"But the child had a rich dark complexion. Yet such a change might take place if she were brought up much indoors." Then aloud: "Were you accustomed in your childhood to lead a free country life?"

"No," answered the girl; "I lived in the city, and saw little of the country until I came here."

"May I asked what was your father's name? For you were introduced to me as Miss Abraham, and this at first led me to suppose that you and Ruth were sisters."

"My grandfather wishes me to go by his name; he has strictly charged me never to mention my father's name to any one. It was, in fact, only by a chance that I ever came to know it. But I will tell it to you. My father's name was Mervale."

The artist started to his feet, exclaiming in a tone of deep emotion:—

"Baby Rose—found at last!"

Rebekah gazed at him in surprise.

"Does the name of Baby Rose call up no recollection in your mind?" he asked.

"None," she replied.

"And have you no remembrance of the adoring love of a father, and of a sweet face with soft brown eyes that used to bend over you, and of tender hands that used to fondle and caress you?"

"No; as far back as I can remember I lived with a relative who was cold and hard to me, though not actually unkind. At first

I had no companion, but then my cousin Ruth came, and we were brought up together. After the death of the relative we were with, we came to live with our grandfather."

But, notwithstanding this want of recollection, there could not remain a doubt in Morrison's mind that in Rebekah he had indeed discovered Baby Rose; and he thought with rapture of how Jessie would receive the joyous news that he had found her at last, and what happiness might not even yet be in store for them. He unfolded to Rebekah the story of the long missing child. She listened eagerly, and, as soon as he had finished, exclaimed:—

"Then let my grandfather leave his wealth to Ruth, if he chooses! My father is rich too—is he not?—and I shall not be left penniless and have to work, but shall enjoy myself, and have everything that I wish for. No more frowns and weary grandeur!"

Morrison was silent, with a feeling of disappointment that her first thought should be of the worldly advantages that would accrue to her, and not of the love, for its own sake, to which she was about to be restored. But he reflected that, after all, it was but natural she should think thus, having learned from her grandfather to regard wealth as the most valuable thing in life. He began to arrange with her as to the best way in which her departure could be managed. She must leave secretly, as her grandfather would certainly oppose her going. When restored to her proper home, he would demand from Mr. Abraham an explanation of how he had got possession of her, on which subject he could now form no idea. He told Rebekah that it would be well for her to prepare to leave quickly.

"You say that when I was lost in the wood I had on a valuable diamond necklace?" she said. "I should like to take it with me. I once saw my grandfather examining such a necklace as you describe, and it was—oh, so magnificent! I must have it!"

"But how will you get it?" asked Morrison.

"I know," she answered. "There is a room in this house which is called the room of gold, because it is there that my grandfather keeps all his treasures, and his money stored in great coffers. Ruth alone has access to the place where the key of this room is kept. I will confide in her, and beg her to steal the key this evening while my

grandfather is asleep after dinner, and she will conduct you thither, when you can select the necklace and bring it to me."

Morrison hesitated; but he knew that it was only just that Rebekah should have the necklace, it having been in her mother's family for many generations; it would, too, be an indisputable proof of Rebekah's identity with Baby Rose. Still he disliked the idea of thus secretly entering the place where the Jew kept all his most precious things. Rebekah, however, urged him; and at length, reluctantly, he agreed to do as she said.

That evening, as the artist was sitting alone, thinking over the strange discovery of the day, a small, slight figure softly entered the room. It was Ruth Abraham. She held a key in her hand.

"Rebekah has told me all," she said. "My grandfather is asleep now; and, if you come with me, I will bring you to the room of gold."

Morrison rose and silently followed her. Passing through a door which he had not observed before, they descended a steep flight of stairs, then went along several winding passages, at the end of which was another door. This Ruth unlocked, and they stood in a spacious chamber.

The lamp that Ruth carried dimly lighted the place, but it served to show walls covered with rich tapestry, a floor inlaid with rare mosaics, and glass cases from which the gleam of gold and jewels shone forth. On every side, as the artist looked around, gold and precious stones and beautiful and valuable things of every description met and dazzled his gaze. Opposite one of the most brilliant of the glass cases a crimson velvet couch was drawn up, as if the Jew had lately been feasting his sight upon the splendor he had gathered about him.

Truly it had not been misnamed the "room of gold." Morrison stood bewildered in the midst, feeling as if he had been suddenly transported to the subterranean palace of some genii. But Ruth recalled him to the errand that had brought him thither. Swiftly approaching one of the glass cases, she opened it, saying:—

"See now if what you seek be here, and quickly, lest my grandfather should awake and come hither."

Morrison proceeded to search, but, though diamonds in abundance met his gaze, the necklace he sought did not appear to be there. Suddenly a low, startled cry from

Ruth, who stood behind, caused him to turn round quickly. In her hand she held a casket, from which she had withdrawn a diamond necklace—the identical necklace, he instantly perceived.

"I know it, I know it!" she exclaimed in strange agitation. "It awakens recollections in my mind which have lain there vague and dream-like for years, which I have fancied might be memories of some former happy state in which I had existed before I was born into the world! Faces once familiar appear to look forth from these jewels, and I seem to hear voices calling me by a name that I haven't heard—oh, for so long, but that I have often tried to remember! It comes to me now, the name of Baby Rose, and other names—Jessie! Surely I once wore this necklace? I remember running through a wood with it round my neck, and seeing it sparkle in the sun; this very wood, too, it was! I used to wonder why it struck me with such a haunting feeling of familiarity—and the hill, and other spots—as if I had not seen them for the first time when I came to live here with my grandfather! Mr. Morrison, tell me what it means? Why does this necklace rouse up all these recollections?"

"It means that you, and not Rebekah, are the long missing child," exclaimed Morrison. "There has been some mistake which we shall soon fathom. But I see the resemblance now; and, if I had noticed you more before, I could not have failed to discover it." As he spoke he put the necklace round her neck, and, bending down, kissed her forehead.

Rebekah, who was very anxious about the necklace, and feared that Mr. Abraham might awake and go to his treasure-room, had followed Morrison and Ruth, that she might warn them in case of a surprise. The door was slightly ajar, and, in order to watch the success of the search, she peeped in. She heard Ruth's sudden cry on beholding the necklace, and her following words, and perceived that her own hopes were at an end. From the first she had secretly doubted whether the artist was right in supposing that he had discovered the missing child in her. But she had determined to take advantage of the mistake, if mistake it were.

Anger and unreasonable jealousy of her cousin now filled her mind. She instantly resolved how to act; and, noiselessly speed-

ing back through the winding passages, with flushed cheeks and flashing eyes she ran into the presence of Mr. Abraham.

"Grandfather, wake up!" she cried, laying her hand on his arm and shaking it. "There are robbers in the room of gold—Mr. Morrison and your favorite Ruth! She is stealing your jewels and money; and I have overheard them planning to elope together this night!"

"It is a falsehood you are telling me," exclaimed the old man, "I do not believe it!" But he had risen, and his face was pale, and his voice trembled as he spoke.

"But only come, grandfather, and see for yourself whether it is true or not;" and, taking him by the arm, the girl half pulled him from the room.

"If she is there, she shall suffer for it as much as if she had not a drop of my blood in her veins!" he said sternly.

It was at the moment when they reached the door that Morrison, having put the necklace round Ruth's neck, stooped to kiss her.

"Rebekah," whispered Mr. Abraham, "lock the door—the key is in it—and give the key to me."

Quickly and noiselessly the girl did as she was ordered. Her grandfather placed the key in his pocket and turned away.

"She is safe now till I have her arrested," he muttered.

The court was crowded; for the case about to commence excited considerable interest. The young girl charged with the crime of stealing her grandfather's jewels belonged to a Jewish family of known wealth and respectability. When she entered, many leaned forward to gaze at her. As she took her place in the dock, the brilliancy and sunshine of the bright, spring morning, shining through a window opposite, beamed full upon her, bringing out a chestnut gleam. She raised her eyes—soft, dewdrop eyes—and fixed them upon the face of the magistrate, who started violently, and half rose. At the same moment a scream was heard, and a woman rushed forward and clasped the prisoner in her arms. It was Jessie Mervale,

who had recognized her sister; and the magistrate was no other than her father.

The story of the artist, and the facts which Mr. Abraham was now compelled to relate, explained everything. A few years after Mr. Abraham's daughter had married Mr. Mervale, the Jew, disguised as a peasant, had come to the place, and taken up his abode in the ruin in the wood. It was only then that he heard of his daughter's death; but, finding that she had left a child, he remained on the spot. When Baby Rose, in her pursuit of the butterfly, ran in among the bushes, she fell into a vault that was beneath the ruin round which these bushes clustered. On the same evening, when the Jew entered the place, he was surprised to see a child lying there, with a diamond necklace round her neck. On stooping down, he instantly recognized the necklace as having been his daughter's, and knew that this must be her child.

To revenge himself on Mr. Mervale, whom he bitterly hated, and looked upon as having stolen his daughter, and that the child might be brought up in the Jewish faith, he determined to keep possession of her. He sent her away to the relative who had charge of his son's child, and for many years never saw either of the children. When, after the death of this person, Mr. Abraham came to take them to his home, by a mistake of the woman who had been in attendance on the deceased relative, Rebekah was pointed out to him as his daughter's child; but on reference to some papers, it was now clearly proved that Ruth was in reality Miss Mervale.

Ruth—or rather Rose Mervale—returned with her father and sister to their home. Soon afterwards, Jessie, completely restored to her reason by the happy recovery of her darling, rewarded the constancy of Morrison by becoming his wife.

Rebekah gained nothing by her treachery; for Mr. Abraham, completely disgusted with the part she had acted, discarded her. When he died, about a year after, his great wealth was left to neither of his granddaughters, but went to enrich some Jewish institution.

THE INUNDATION.

BY GEORGE H. COOMER.

"I ASSURE you," said Mrs. Hayden, warming at the name Osceola, "that none of you Northern people know the Indians. They have their great men and their small men, as we have ours; but as a race, they possess a high sense of honor and of gratitude. During the Seminole war we lived in Florida, where my father owned a plantation, but so far removed from the Indian territory that no great danger of attack was apprehended. There occurred, when I was about eighteen, a temporary suspension of hostilities. The red men were nearly starved out, and their leaders had a 'talk' with the United States officials, resulting, however, only in the resumption of arms.

"One day during this incidental calm, my father went from home on a visit to a Spaniard named Romera, who occupied a plantation at the distance of twenty miles, and nearer the scene of war than ours. It was a business call, my father having learned that Romera wished to dispose of his estate. Soon after his departure my mother was taken ill, and so violent was the attack that our favorite house-servant, a good, motherly old negress, found her skill in medicine at fault, and I became exceedingly alarmed. The only physician of whom we had any knowledge lived at a great distance, but I despatched a servant on a fleet horse to summon him.

"The negro had but just departed, when, looking towards a forest that skirted our plantation on one side, I observed a number of Indians emerge from it and approach the house. The state of truce existing had doubtless given them confidence to stray beyond the swampy tract where for years the red warriors had so heroically held their own. Our field hands were all at work where we could neither see them nor make them hear us, for those Florida plantations were very large, and there were about the house only my mother, the younger children and myself, together with three or four negro women.

"Had not my mother been ill, we might have fled; but as it was, we had only to await the danger, with little hope from the precarious truce of which we had been informed. As the sombre-looking caravan neared, how-

ever, and the dusky figures occasionally half turned to address their companions or to gaze about them, I perceived that several of the band carried papooses slung upon their shoulders, and further observation convinced me that we had to deal only with women and children; yet as there were no less than fourteen of them, we were completely at their mercy in case their attitude should be hostile; and much as Aunt Rosa, the negro nurse, loved my mother, she was not equal to the ordeal of confronting the new-comers, not only herself but her sable companions vanishing like dark veins of mist when the shrill-voiced Indians halted at the door.

"I met the intruders with the best grace I could assume. They looked excessively weary, and all of them had an emaciated appearance. The poor little children that they led by the hand were piteous in the extreme, and even the papooses seemed to share the general misery. The squaws could not speak a word of English, but by signs they told me that they wanted food. Poor creatures! I knew it well; and the moment that their condition became apparent my terror left me. It happened that we had a large quantity of food already cooked; this I gave them; and my father having the day previous killed a deer, I made signs to my guests that it was at their disposal. Several of our cows were near the house, and now calling loudly to Aunt Rosa and the other servants, I succeeded in drawing them from their various hiding-places, and ordered them to obtain enough new milk to satisfy the entire band.

"With what avidity the starved children drank! and I could see that the stoical squaws relaxed their hard, pinched features, as, turning their eyes from their little ones, they fixed them upon myself. What a circle it was! Seated beneath the great trees in our dooryard were nine women and children, besides the papooses at the back. Their long hair reached away to the grass, and under the low foreheads the black eyes twinkled and glittered. The little papooses were the color of new pennies, and I well remember how they would wink as the sun-rays fell across their faces through the interstices of the foliage.

"Meantime our field hands, twenty in number, probably warned by the female negroes, returned to their collection of cabins and began to gather about us. The scale of strength was now turned, and it became evident that the Indians looked with some apprehension upon my acquisition of a force so much superior to their own. I, however, took pains to set them at ease. All the while my mother had been greatly suffering, and my attentions had been divided between her and our famishing visitors. At length, while I was within doors, one of the latter entered. She made signs indicative of profound gratitude, and gave me to understand, also, that she was poor, very, very poor. Then taking from beneath her blanket a powder-horn, and glancing over her shoulder as if afraid that her companions should witness the act, she presented it to me. It was full of powder. Of course I could value such a present but little for its intrinsic worth, yet for this very reason the simplicity of the forest child in offering it moved me to tears. It was all that she had to give. Wife, no doubt, of a Seminole brave, she had taken the powder from his lodge. It came between her little ones and starvation. But the marvelous value attached to the article by her martial race, made her tremble for the consequence should her blanketed husband know of the deed. All this I saw at a glance, and returning the gift, signified to her that the Seminole hunters might need it for the chase.

"Perceiving that my mother was ill, she now approached the bedside and looked earnestly upon the patient, felt the fevered pulse and laid her hand on the burning forehead. Then gliding from the door and speaking a few words to her companions, she disappeared in the forest. The others now, one by one entered the room, and never was I more impressed with the severe simplicity of nature than when those dusky shapes came each noiselessly to look upon my sick mother. Their blankets, descending to the floor, their moccasins of deer-skin, their coal-black, untrained hair, and their impassive but wild faces, were all eloquent of the wilderness. There was a spirit in the scene that spoke of the old oaks, and the mosses, and the black dismal pools.

"Presently she who had gone to the forest returned with various herbs, and placing them in my hands, signified that I should keep them for my mother. I immediately

did so, and upon administering the liquid, the result was surprising. My mother almost instantly expressed a sense of relief, and in half an hour she had nearly recovered. The young squaw by signs directed me as to the future use of the herbs, and then, laden with provisions, the dark train moved away to the woodland.

"My father, upon returning, informed us that he had purchased Romera's plantation, which, however, would not be vacated by its present occupant for a considerable time. Romera, he said, had a day or two previous driven away some Indian women and children, and in relating the circumstance, boasted, ruffian-like, that, as they had been somewhat tardy in quitting the plantation, he had hastened their departure by sending after them a rifle ball. From a conversation between two of the field hands father had learned that a little Indian girl was wounded by the shot.

"The barbarous villain! I could imagine the poor mother conveying her dying little one into the forest. Would not the stern men of the eagle quills avenge the deed? True the war-path was far away, but might it not be traced nearer? True there existed an armistice, but could it shield the base-hearted Spaniard who had already broken it?

"It was not long ere hostilities were resumed, and many a stirring tale was brought to our ears of Osceola and his warriors. The United States troops, however, constantly between ourselves and the various scenes of strife, seemed to offer effectual protection. At the end of three months my father, my mother and myself visited the Romera plantation, from which the former owner was now about removing. Remembering the poor little child, I looked with disgust upon the unfeeling white man while he talked of having slaughtered Seminoles upon various occasions as if they had been only wild beasts. Poor little Indian girl! What of the hapless mother? What of the tall brave who somewhere trod the war-path with his rifle and belted hatchet?

"While we remained at the plantation, there came thither some half-dozen United States soldiers, who informed us that their detachment had been routed in a desperate battle with Osceola, and that they were the only survivors. Three times had they broken the Indian array, but the voice of the great chief, which they could hear above all the clamor, had inspired his warriors with heroic

courage, and thrice they had rallied to the charge. A hundred soldiers had fallen before their hatchets; a provision train was captured, and Osceola's men were no longer famishing.

"The intelligence awakened serious apprehensions. Other detachments of troops were not very far away, yet for the moment the barrier between ourselves and the enemy was removed, and I could not help feeling glad that we were not to live on the Romera plantation, but only to let it.

"Toward night there commenced falling one of the most remarkable rains ever experienced in Florida. It was a flood pouring from cloud to earth like an ocean. My young brothers and sister, four in number, under the care of the faithful negro servants, were at home, and on their account we were anxious to return that evening; but the pouring torrent forbade. The rivers in our neighborhood were already greatly swelled by rains which had fallen further up the country, and it would require but little in addition to cause an overflow of the banks. Hence, while the rain roared upon the roof, and the thunder crashed with terrific reverberations, our thoughts wandered to our dear ones. They were from six to twelve years old, and having never witnessed anything approaching to the uproar of this tempest, would undoubtedly feel much alarm.

"At daybreak the storm abated, and soon after, mounting our horses, my mother and myself, like most southern ladies being expert horsewomen, we set out for home. The way was intolerably bad, and often we turned aside to avoid roaring torrents or impassable gullies. It was on one of these occasions, and just while we were sheltered by a clump of trees, that my father, rising in his stirrups, uttered an exclamation of surprise. Its cause was soon apparent; for, dashing, plunging and springing past us at a furlong's distance, three horsemen shot into view. Two of them wore the blue coats of United States soldiers, while the third, dressed as a civilian, rode the favorite cream-colored horse of Senor Romera, and was doubtless the Spaniard himself. Behind rose horrid yells, and following fast came twenty mounted Seminoles. We saw it all—they had attacked the plantation, had killed four of the soldiers, and were now pursuing the remaining two and Romera. The Spaniard had neither wife nor child; I was glad of that.

"They were soon out of sight, and the cowardly Spaniard, careful of no one's safety but his own, was evidently making for our plantation, hoping among the confusion of negroes and whites to escape. So great was father's anxiety that he spurred forward, resolving if the children should be in peril to die with them; and mother and myself—he could not keep us back—dashed after him. But, upon mounting higher land, we saw the plantation wholly submerged. The two soldiers and Romera had turned aside from it across an arm of the flood, and the hindmost of the Indians were just disappearing. Our house was in ruins, and we could see the children clinging to the wreck, with faithful Aunt Rose in their midst. Our own position was upon a peninsula of rising ground, with the river rushing past upon one side, and in front a wide torrent almost equal to another river making off at a right angle. Beyond the river and above our standpoint was the wreck of the plantation. Upon setting out on our journey we had crossed in a boat, the negroes guiding over the horses which swam the stream. But now we doubted if the animals could swim against so strong a current. It was necessary at first to cross the wide inflowing arm, to arrive opposite the house before venturing upon the main stream.

"Bidding us remain where we were, father plunged his horse into the water, and with much difficulty reached a spot opposite the children. But the wide river was now before him; and just at this moment we saw Aunt Rosa, while attempting to assist a fellow-servant, fall off her frail support, and together with her unfortunate companion disappear beneath the current. The children were alone in the waste of waters. This was more than mother could bear without an effort to reach them. We were almost frantic, and urged our horses forward, they became unmanageable at the very outset, rearing and snorting as their hoofs sank in the miry earth, and mother was thrown into the torrent. In attempting to grasp her I lost my balance, and both horses struggled riderless to the shore, thence galloping to a distance. We were not yet beyond our depth, and succeeded in regaining the bank.

"We now saw father swimming his horse across the stream above, and we saw, too, that the wreck to which the children clung was in motion. It had broken asunder, and

my sister Mabel, six years old, was separated from the others, with only our favorite house-dog, Cleopatra and two little puppies for company. The dog manifested a sense of the dismal situation. Father was making directly towards Mabel, but managing his horse with some difficulty, as the side current rendered his course uncertain, when suddenly we saw the animal struggle violently, as if in contact with some floating mass beneath the surface. Father was using his arms vigorously to clear himself from something in his way, which we soon perceived was a huge drift tree; but in spite of all his endeavors, the horse went from under him and he remained clinging to the branches. I cannot recall that moment without something of the agony I then felt. Oh, it was dreadful! Father utterly powerless, and our dear little treasures drifting to sure destruction. I had almost lost the sense of my position, it seemed so like an awful dream, when mother cried out:—

“There are the Indians! there are the Indians! Oh, it is worse and worse! They will kill my little ones if they can reach them!”

“The Seminoles were on the same side of the river with ourselves, but considerably above us; and now we saw them streaming down to the bank, the water that overflowed the flat land being splashed and thrown in spray by their spirited horses. Then wading more slowly the animals reached the deep stream, and stretched their limbs in strong and labored swimming. They were heading right for father and our darlings, having divided in two parties. In a state of feeling that I cannot describe, we waited the result. Would their fierce hatchets descend upon those beloved heads? Why did they not sound the war-whoop?”

“Nearer and nearer they approached the forlorn sufferers, and at last a number of them surrounded my father. I then observed for the first time that they had a led horse, while the Indian who had before ridden him remained on the bank. This horse I saw my father mount. Almost at the same moment the other party reached the children, and now bearing them in their arms they approached the spot where we stood, returning to the same side of the river, as it offered the safest landing-place. All our sweet little flock were prisoners, but it was something that they were rescued from immediate death, and there was at least a chance for

hope. With all the courage we could summon we prepared to meet the terrible red-men, and with them depart for the Seminole country.

“No sooner had they reached firm land than both mother and myself, disregarding the presence of the grim warriors, rushed forward and clasped the children to our hearts. In the meantime others of the Seminoles joined us, and with them as prisoners were the two United States soldiers. Looking up from the dear little children, we saw about us a circle of warriors, in whose stoical faces I in vain tried to read our doom. Not a word had they spoken to interrupt the holiness of the meeting between ourselves and the children; but now an Indian of a tall and finely moulded figure advancing to my father addressed him. As he did so, I shuddered to see in his belt a scalp with black hair of a peculiarly crisp appearance, and such I knew was the hair of Romera.

“‘Osceola is a great Seminole chief,’ he said, ‘and the white brave has heard of his deeds. Osceola stands before the white brave. Three moons since the Seminoles talked with their enemies. There was no war. Osceola was far away, and his women and children had no food. They visited a white man’s lodge, and he shot the little child of Osceola. But his rifle is silent; his scalp is in Osceola’s belt. The Great Spirit is good; the little child did not die. Osceola’s people came to your squaw and your daughter, and returned to their lodges with food. The Seminole cannot forget; to-day he has remembered, and the white brave’s people are safe. It is well.’

“Never before nor since have I been so happy, so grateful. I flung myself at the feet of the great chief and prayed Heaven to bless him. But Osceola said the Great Spirit knew—the daughter of the pale-face need not tell him.

“Then father petitioned the chief for the lives of the two soldiers, and upon their solemn promise that they would not again invade the Indian country, they were liberated. The government, of course, would not, under the circumstances, compel them to break their parole.

“The grateful chief conducted us to a place of safety from the inundation, and then bade us farewell. Father repaired the plantation to the best of his ability, but soon after sold both that and the one which he had lately purchased.”

FINDING NEW BIRDS.

MR. HENRY WHITELEY, a well known field naturalist has just returned from an expedition into the interior of British Guiana, in search of new and rare specimens of ornithology; and a *St. James Gazette* correspondent says:—

Any one acquainted with Mr. Whiteley's researches, his travels in Japan, the hardships and dangers of his twelve years' explorations in Peru, and more recently his expeditions into the district of Roraima, would expect to find him in physical appearance somewhat in harmony with the life he has led during the past twenty-five years. In point of fact, the elderly appearance, the thin, almost delicate physique, and the quiet manner of this veteran naturalist make it almost impossible to imagine him leaving for long periods the haunts of civilization, and roaming alone among the Indian tribes of South America.

Mr. Whiteley's "last venture into the tropics" was made into a district entirely new to him. Some time ago, when he was in British Guiana, he went up the river Mazaruni and explored the regions of Roraima. He then discovered thirty-five species of birds that were never before known to exist, and four new species of humming birds, besides a great collection of butterflies. The traveler left Bartica grove in Nov. 1886, and in a boat made for the river Siparuni, a branch of the Essequibo. He had with him a Calcutta coolie who had prayed hard to be allowed to accompany him into the bush. There was not a solitary Indian on the Siparuni upon arriving there, so that it was necessary to engage boat hands to go up a tributary river, the Takutu. Here Mr. Whiteley found a few Indians, and decided to pitch his tent.

And now the first trouble of the expedition began. Mr. Whiteley's method is to engage Indians in making his collection. They are quite as skillful in the woods as the more romantic novelists make them out to be. They can kill the tiniest birds with a blowpipe and a small dart made of pointed reed, and they are wonderful adepts with the gun. These Indians are sent out in the morning, and they bring back the birds at night. Of course, Mr. Whiteley himself collects and shoots, but the great difficulty an Englishman has in these forests is to find the bird, and get at it after it is shot. Since

last he had been in the interior, in 1884, some kind-hearted adventurer had told the Indians that Mr. Whiteley received \$100 for every bird he shot. Now, although a new species of humming bird might be worth \$100, these Indians were only bringing in specimens of birds already known. But they had got this \$100 notion into their heads, and as soon as the house was up they left its owner, every man of them. However, he managed to get in this district some birds that he had never known before. It was, however, a low, damp place. Swampy marshes lay all round it. Sometimes, when the river rose, it was impossible to travel half a mile without having to wade more than once through water reaching up to the waist; and after spending some time here Mr. Whiteley's health broke down, and he made preparations for moving on to higher ground. He now managed to come across some Indians, and sent for more to Quonga. When they turned up, all the boxes were packed, and the party traveled to Quonga, leaving the coolie behind with an Indian to look after him. He now succeeded in employing Indians to help him, and managed pretty well. And here he stayed, enjoying indifferent health, until the Christmas of 1887 was approaching. It was a wretched little hut where the traveler was staying, so he made up his mind to spend Christmas at Takutu. His house there would have been pretty comfortable if the coolie had been somewhere else. There was reason to believe that this unpleasant individual was a leper, though he vigorously denied it. But Mr. Whiteley had a few novels at this house—he never takes scientific works for reading in the bush—and some creature comforts that could not be obtained at Quonga; so he spent the Christmas there. As to food, when he goes into the interior Mr. Whiteley always takes a stock of rice and preserved meats with him, but these he keeps for a time of necessity. Meantime, he barter with the Indians, giving them powder, shot, knives, and so forth, and takes in exchange their cassava bread and fish. But he has once or twice found himself in sore straits for food. When he was on Roraima he had an experience which is probably unique in this respect. He was reduced to live for a short time on the tiny bodies of humming birds, and others almost as small.

OUR YOUNG FOLKS' STORY-TELLER.

CHANGING BABIES.

BY LOUISE DUPEE.

A SPLENDID October day it was. The flowers in the park made believe that it was midsummer—that they hadn't a dream of any such person as Jack Frost, though only the night before he had threatened to take their lives, and they must have known, poor things! that their end was near. But they fluttered their silken petals in the sunshine so gayly and carelessly, and the fountains sang, and the bright-tinted leaves on the trees (what the wind had not carried away by armfuls) danced and whispered as they did when they were young.

"It seems as if summer had come back again," said Letty, leaning over the balcony to look down the sunny street.

Baby was playing in his cradle close beside the window, and he said he thought so, too, in his queer, baby language, whereupon he began to make it known in good earnest that he wanted to go out of doors. You would not have understood what he meant unless you were well acquainted with the way they talk in Babyland. There isn't a word in it like English, you know; but Letty understood it very well.

"No, Baby," said she, "you can't go out this morning, because Nora is helping mamma sew. Mamma is very busy, and can't spare her."

But Baby had no idea of being put off in this way. He urged the matter very decidedly, making sudden leaps toward the window, as if he intended to fly out of it, and pulling a corner of the gay worsted cradle-blanket over his little yellow head, as if he were already equipped to start.

"Poor Baby!" said Letty, "it's too bad you can't go; but Letty will draw you in the hall, and how nice that will be!"

"No, no," screamed Baby, "it won't be nice at all. I will go out of doors." And he brought his little pink fist down with a will, I assure you, and his eyes flashed through the tears like two great, bright stars.

"O mamma," said Letty, running up to her mother, who came into the room just, then, "Baby is dying to go out of doors."

"Dear me," said she, "I wish he could

go out. It's a beautiful day, and the air would do him good; but there's nobody to take him. I've so much sewing to do that I can't spare Nora a moment, so of course she can't go. Find something to amuse him, Letty, and he'll forget all about it in a little while."

But no, Baby wouldn't forget it. He screamed until he was purple in the face, though all Letty's toys were placed at his disposal, and he was danced about the room to the most fascinating melodies of Mother Goose.

"Let me take him out, mamma," said Letty, at last, very timidly; for she knew very well that she was not considered by the household to be a very trustworthy person, though there was no reason for it, only once, a long time ago, when she was allowed to draw Baby up and down the sidewalk in front of the house, in the excitement which attended the appearance of a gay circus procession with music and prancing horses, she forgot all about her charge, and left him at the corner of the street. Of course Baby screamed lustily when he found himself deserted, and no one can tell what might have happened to him if a gentleman who was a friend of the family, passing that way, had not recognized him and taken him home; for Letty didn't think of him again for the afternoon. Since then until now, Letty had never ventured to ask if she might take Baby out.

"If I dared to trust you with him, you might," said her mamma.

"But I'll be very careful, and think of him all the time, mamma," said Letty, eagerly. "Belle Hunt isn't any older than I am, and she takes her little brother out every day."

"Belle Hunt isn't such a little flyaway as you are. What if a circus procession should make its appearance again?"

Letty looked very much ashamed. "I shouldn't do as I did before," said she. "Won't you please let me take him, mamma?"

Baby added his most deafening screams

to the appeal, and after a moment's hesitation mamma concluded that she might take him; and indeed she could hardly do otherwise and be left in the possession of her senses, for Baby's screams were shrill and sharp enough to make one insane, and there was no prospect of an end to them until he gained his point. Such a determined baby you never saw.

As soon as he saw his cloak and cap his angry cries changed to laughter; and when once seated in his little carriage, he began to chatter in the sweetest and yet the most demure and earnest manner, as if he were asking everybody's pardon for screaming so loud, and thanking Letty for being so good as to aid him in coaxing his hard-hearted mamma to let him have a mouthful of fresh air, at any rate.

"Don't go any further than the park," said mamma, calling after Letty as she turned down the street, Baby crowing and clapping his hands in the carriage before her.

The park was full of people, as it always was on such bright days, and so many babies were out! Merry babies and grave babies, chattering babies and silent babies, pretty, fat, dimpled babies and thin, homely, uninteresting ones; babies in carriages and babies in arms, all seeming to enjoy themselves after their own fashion. Letty thought hers was the prettiest one of all, he was so rosy and had such bright eyes. He was very silent now, looking about him with broad, unwinking satisfaction, and peeping into the faces of the babies they met with an air of grave curiosity.

Letty grew tired of drawing him about after awhile, and sat down to rest on a bench opposite the fountain; and by-and-by a little girl about her own age, who was drawing a baby in a carriage, also, came and sat down beside her. Letty did not know her, and they looked shyly at each other at first; then they smiled, and at last they spoke. The two babies did just the same thing; at least they spoke to each other in their own language, and after awhile seemed to take great delight in each other's society.

The new-comer was a little girl baby, with the roundest blue eyes imaginable, and a little puckered-up, red mouth. Baby seemed to admire her immensely. He leaned out of the carriage and patted her face, compared her rosy little fists with his own, and kept up a continual soft, low chattering to her,

which she answered most sweetly. So they went on delightfully with their baby love-making for a long time, until at last the baby girl's round eyes began to grow smaller, and she stuffed nearly the whole of her little pink hand into her mouth, and fell asleep.

Baby looked at her for a few moments in astonishment, then his eyes began to grow smaller, too, and after a few moments of grave meditation, he nestled his rosy little cheek into the pillow, and followed her into dreamland.

"Only see, they are both fast asleep!" said Letty to the other little girl.

"Yes," said she, "and we ought to cover their faces up, the flies trouble them so, poor little things! Isn't it queer that they should have veils just alike, and their carriage blankets should be just alike, too?"

"I'm so tired of sitting still, aren't you?" said restless little Letty.

"Yes," said the other little girl; "but if we draw the babies about we shall wake them up."

"I know that," said Letty; "but do you think it would do any hurt to leave them here by themselves, just a very little while? We might walk round in the paths and keep within sight of them all the time, you know."

"Well," said her friend, "so we might, only we mustn't go very far."

So they walked up and down the path a long time, chatting together very merrily, and never out of sight of their little charges, who were sleeping as sweetly as possible. But by-and-by who should come along but a man with a hand-organ and the most fascinating monkey that ever was seen! He was surrounded by an admiring crowd, and Letty and her friend were eager enough to join them. The monkey had on a sort of military cap, with a wonderful upright plume in it, and a red jacket ornamented with gilt buttons, and such tricks as he performed! I couldn't begin to tell you one-half of them. Letty gave him a penny, and he took off his hat to her in such a funny way that she was nearly convulsed with laughter; then he danced to the music of the hand-organ, turned somersaults, and then he made believe he was making a speech, gesticulating like some crazy Fourth of July orator. Letty and her companion forgot the babies and everything else, in their delight at his accomplishments; till all of a sudden the other little girl came to her senses, and was so

frightened that she grew pale at the first thought of her little sister.

"Oh, the babies! just think of the babies!" said she, to Letty. "Who knows but something has happened to them, and it is growing quite dark!"

"Dear me!" said Letty, "I didn't think it was so late; but the babies are all safe. I can see the carriages now, just as we left them. I suppose they're sleeping still. Baby always has a long nap in the afternoon. Mamma will be so worried, though; she'll never let me take him out again."

"And my mamma will be dreadfully worried, too. I must hurry home as fast as ever I can," said her companion.

The babies were both asleep, and they were both of them taken home speedily, I assure you. The two girls parted at the gate of the park, going different ways.

Letty was all out of breath when she got home, and she found her mamma standing on the steps, looking down the street with such an anxious face.

"Why, Letty," said she, "where have you been so long? Didn't you know that I never like to have Baby kept out so late?"

"Yes," faltered Letty, ashamed to tell of the hand-organ and the monkey, "but nothing has happened to him; he's asleep now."

"Dear little fellow! he didn't have his usual nap this morning, and he's making up for it now. We won't take him out of his carriage now, but will let him sleep as long as he will," said mamma.

So the carriage was drawn into the hall, and Baby was left to finish his nap undisturbed; and to Letty's surprise and delight, nothing more was said about her having kept him out so late.

"It does Baby good to take the air," said her papa to mamma, at the tea-table. "Letty says he has been asleep half the afternoon, and he is sleeping now as quietly as can be, and he's usually such a nervous, restless baby, and has such short naps."

It was not very long, however, before a shrill cry echoed from the hall—Baby's announcement that he was awake—and Nora hastened to take up the darling.

An exclamation of mingled fear and astonishment from her sent all the family in breathless haste up-stairs.

"O ma'am!" she exclaimed, to the poor frightened mother, "whativer has Miss Letty been doin' to the baby? His countenance has changed entirely, or else she's

been and swapped him off for a pindlin' thin', with the starin'est eyes I ever seen!"

"Oh," said Letty, white to the very lips, "it is the little girl baby! O mamma, we must have changed in the park!"

Both papa and mamma were dumb with fear, and bewildered at first, while the poor little girl in Nora's arms frightened at the sight of so many strange faces, began to cry piteously. Then they made Letty tell her story; and as soon as she had finished it, papa seized his hat and hurried away down the street as fast as ever he could. Mamma walked up and down the room with nervous haste; Letty sobbed in a corner.

An hour passed away—such an anxious, wretched hour! Letty could hear her own heart beating so loud and fast that she was frightened. Mamma still continued to pace the floor, now and then pausing at the window to strain her eyes through the darkness. At last there was a sound of feet on the doorsteps, and she rushed frantically to the door, and there was Baby himself—her baby! She heard and recognized his merry voice in a long, broken string of high-keyed baby talk, before the door was opened, and she saw his blessed face nestled against papa's shoulder. Then in came a strange lady and gentleman, at the sound of whose voices the little girl baby began to crow, and in another moment she was safely clasped in her mother's arms, too. It was a time of rejoicing, you may be sure. How the two babies talked, both trying to tell their adventures in the same breath, and making such a noise that they almost deafened everybody! It seemed that papa had made his search in vain, and was returning home with an anxious heart to try and consider what he should do next, when he happened to meet a lady and gentleman wandering frantically about, first on one side of the street and then on the other, and drawing a baby carriage. Of course he thought in a moment, from the appearance of things, that the baby in that carriage might be his baby, and found on investigation that it was his baby, and that the gentleman and lady were as anxious to get rid of him as he was to find him. And oh, how delighted they were to learn that their own baby was all safe and unharmed, and they could have her in their arms in so short a time!

Baby is a great boy, now, and can play in the park by himself; and never after that did Letty care to take him out in his carriage.

ARCHIE DUNLAP'S NOAH'S ARK.

BY WILLIAM L. WILLIAMS.

ONCE there was a little boy named Archibald Dunlap; he had blue eyes, rosy cheeks and curly golden hair. At the time of my story he was just six years old. This little boy did not have any brothers and sisters, but he had a good papa and mamma who were very kind to him, and brought him a great many things to make him happy. He had so many toys that his mother had to give him two shelves in her china-closet to keep them on. He had a lot of picture books, too, such as "Mother Goose's Melodies," "Old Dame Trot and her Wonderful Cat," "Goody Two-Shoes," "The Three Bears," and a great many more besides. Archie, as he was always called, took great delight in his books, and knew them all by heart, he had heard them read to him so often; for every evening, when his father got home from the store, he would take off his boots and coat, put on a pretty dressing-gown and slippers, and then Archie would perch himself on his knee, while his father read aloud to him. Sometimes he would tell a story instead of reading, and Archie liked this much better. There were one or two stories which he was always ready to hear repeated, but usually he wanted new ones "that he had never heard before."

One Thursday afternoon Mrs. Dunlap was going out to do some shopping, and Archie could not accompany her, because he had a cold which kept him in the house; so he would have to stay alone, no one being in the house except Joanna the cook.

"Mamma," said he, as his mother stooped to kiss him just before she went out, "will you buy me something at Mr. Wheelock's?"

Mr. Wheelock kept an apothecary's store, but in one corner he had a small lot of toys, and it was a favorite resort for Archie, when he went "down town," to stop in and examine the wonderful cats and dogs, whistles and trumpets, games and picture books to be found there.

"Yes, my son; what would you like to have me buy for you?" replied his mother.

"Oh, I think I should like a Noah's Ark better than anything else," said Archie.

"Perhaps I will bring you one," said his mamma, "if Mr. Wheelock has any."

"One thing more I will ask before you go, mamma," said Archie; will you stop at Mrs. Sargent's, and ask Cephas to come over and play with me?"

Mrs. Dunlap promised that she would do so, and Archie took his seat at the parlor window, to watch for his playfellow's coming.

"I know what I'll do," he said to himself. "Cephas likes to play jackstraws; I will get mine already for him."

So he went to the closet, and took from his shelf a round box, which he brought to the table and poured its contents out upon the cloth. There were sticks and hoes, rakes, shovels, ladders, and lots of things to make the game difficult to play.

In a few minutes Archie spied Cephas coming down the street; he was running and skipping along, with a package in his hand. Archie wondered very much what it could be, all done up so nicely in white paper. Cephas soon came running in, saying:—

"O Archie, I am going to stay all the afternoon with you! and I have brought my box of dominoes to play with you."

"That's good! And I've got my jackstraws already for a game, too. Which would you play first?" asked Archie.

"I guess jackstraws will be the best," replied Cephas.

Now Archie was very desirous of playing with the dominoes, for he did not have any, and they were new to him; but he remembered that Cephas was a visitor, and it would be very impolite to insist upon playing the dominoes, so he assented to playing jackstraws. Cephas began the game; he dropped the bundle of straws in a confused heap, and then, taking the little hooks, commenced picking them up carefully. He had gathered quite a number, until at last, in trying to take up a ladder, he caused a rake to move at the same time.

"Ah, you joggled, Cephas!" exclaimed Archie, who had been watching the operation very closely.

It was now Archie's turn, and he had a lucky throw, for some very difficult pieces were found lying separate from any others, and therefore easily taken. So the game went on, until all the sticks were taken up, and then commenced the counting up. Cephas was the victor.

"Do you want to play again?" asked Archie.

"Yes. I think this is a splendid game," replied his playmate.

Archie gave a longing look at the box of dominoes, but again controlled his inclination, and began a new game. This time he was the winner.

"Now let's try the dominoes!" exclaimed he.

So the much-wished-for game was opened, and Cephas taught Archie how to play. This amused them for awhile; then they grew tired of it, and wanted to do something else.

"Let's play with my ninepins," suggested Archie.

"No; I don't want to play that," answered Cephas.

"Will you spin my humming-top?" asked Archie.

This was agreed to. The top was found, but the cord was not with it.

"Here—take this," said Cephas, picking up the cord which had tied up his box of dominoes.

It did very well, but the top would not spin good on the carpet.

"We want a bare floor to spin it on," said Cephas.

"It would be better; but we can't take up the carpet," said Archie.

"Can't we go out in the kitchen? That would be a grand place to spin a top," remarked Cephas.

"Tiptop," said Archie; but I don't believe Joanna will let us spin it there."

"Let's try it, anyway."

They found Joanna busy, making pumpkin pies. She looked rather frowningly at the boys when they entered her domain, but said nothing, and therefore the top-spinning soon commenced. Archie had his first turn, and he made the top hum splendidly. Then Cephas tried it; but, unfortunately, just as the top was fairly spinning, Joanna started across the floor with a large pan of boiled pumpkin in her hands, and she trod upon the top, lost her balance, and over she went, upsetting the pumpkin all over Cephas, and

breaking the dish in pieces. Her arm struck the hot stove, burning it badly.

Here was trouble enough. Cephas began to scream, thinking he was almost killed. Archie was very much frightened, and Joanna was highly exasperated at the accident, and turned the boys out of the kitchen.

"O dear! What shall I do?" cried Cephas, looking in dismay at his clothes, completely daubed with the golden sauce.

"I don't know," said Archie. "I guess you'll have to run home and get your mother to wipe it off. It's too bad! I think that Joanna might have known better than to have done that."

"I don't like to go through the streets looking so," said Cephas.

"Oh, you can run fast, and it won't take you two minutes," replied Archie.

So Cephas started off as fast as he could scamper down the street. Everyone that he passed, stopped and looked round to see who that boy was, so bountifully decorated. When he came to a corner, he turned it so swiftly and abruptly that he went plump against a very fashionably dressed young man, who was taking a walk, hoping to attract attention, and be the "observed of all observers." Now he was pretty sure that people would look at him, for Cephas had transferred a portion of the pumpkin to his new acquaintance, seriously impairing the beauty of the fashionable suit. To add to his distress, a party of young ladies, friends of his, passed by, and looked with wondering eyes at his daubed clothes, and then at Cephas, who had recovered himself, and was again running towards home.

In the meantime Archie returned to the parlor, feeling very sorry for the mishap in the kitchen, and wondering what his mother would say, when she returned, and saw her pumpkin pies spoiled. He wished that he had staid out of the kitchen, and contented himself with some different amusement; but it was no use to wish—the mischief was done, and the best he could do was to be sorry for it. He thought that he might do something for Joanna, because she burnt her arm so badly. He went to a little box of his, where he kept a great many things that he wanted to save, and took from it a finger-ring with five blue stones in it. It was one that he had found when visiting the city. There was not much value in it, but he kept it a long time, and considered it quite a

prize. Now he thought he would give it to Joanna, to console her for the accident which had happened. He took it into the kitchen, and found Joanna dressing her burnt arm. She looked very cross when she saw Archie again, but her countenance changed for the brighter when he said:—

"It was too bad Joanna, that we made you fall and hurt yourself. I am real sorry, and I have brought my ring; you may have it for your own."

Archie tried to persuade Joanna to accept his peace-offering, but she would not, although it had the desired effect of making her good-natured and forgiving. A few moments after this, Archie was rejoiced to see his mother coming up the street, and he hastened to the front door to welcome her.

"Have you been a good boy, Archie?" was her first question.

"No, mother; I am afraid I have not been very good," Archie replied.

"What has been the matter—anything happened?" asked his mother.

"We were spinning my top in the kitchen, and it tripped Joanna up, so that she spilled all the pumpkin pie, and hurt her arm on the stove. I was real sorry, mamma, and hope you will forgive me," said Archie.

"I will certainly forgive you my son," said Mrs. Dunlap, "for I know that you would not do such a thing intentionally. Where is Cephas?"

"He went home, for he was covered with the pumpkin which Joanna spilled on him when she fell," answered Archie.

"I am very sorry that this happened, but I feel happy that you came forward so frankly and told me the whole story, without trying to conceal anything. You are a good boy, Archie, and mother loves you dearly. Here is your Noah's Ark, Archie;" and Mrs. Dunlap handed him a package, neatly tied with a pink cord.

It was carefully untied, and there came forth a beautiful ark, painted yellow, with blue windows, a red roof and a red boat. Archie was delighted; he danced around the room with joy, and then, opening the roof, he took out Noah and his wife, in a yellow suit, Shem and his wife in a blue one. Ham and his wife were dressed in red, while Japhet and his wife were arrayed in a garb

of green. Then came the animals. There were two elephants, two camels, two unicorns, and so on, down to two little mice.

"O mamma, they are splendid! I wish I could set them all up. May I have your card-table to put them on?" exclaimed the happy little fellow.

Mrs. Dunlap opened the card-table, and rolled it into the middle of the room. Then Archie took his Noah's Ark, and placed all the animals in procession, beginning with Noah, and gradually decreasing in size to the end. It looked very pretty when it was done, and Archie called his mother to come and see it. Then he thought of Joanna, and he ran to the kitchen and asked her if she did not want to come and look at it; so Joanna wiped her hands, and came to see the sight. She thought it very grand indeed, and held up both her hands in wondering admiration.

"I wish Cephas had staid, and then he could have seen it," said Archie. "Perhaps I might go and ask him to come up now."

"I think it would be better to wait till to-morrow, and then he can come and help you set them up," suggested his mother.

Archie cheerfully assented to this, for he had always been taught that mother's plans were best, and he never thought of opposing them.

"Can I let them stay till papa gets home?" he asked.

This request was granted, and Archie waited for his father's return. Mr. Dunlap went to the city every morning in the cars, and returned in the evening, and Archie was allowed to sit up until he got home. At last the steam whistle was heard, and Archie cried out, joyfully, "That's papa's train; now he'll be here in a minute." And sure enough, in about a minute the well-known step was heard at the door, and Archie opened it, and found himself in his father's arms.

Then followed a good time. The wonderful Noah's Ark was shown, and all the adventures of the day related. Archie's bedtime soon came, and he gave the good-night kiss, and went to his little bed, to dream of his Noah's Ark, and all the curious animals it contained.

THE HOUSEKEEPER.

SALMON CROQUETTES.—Salmon croquettes are not hard to make, and form a very nice dish for supper or breakfast. Take one large cupful of cold, boiled salmon, minced fine; work in a tablespoonful of melted butter, one beaten egg, and a teaspoonful each of lemon juice and anchovy sauce; put these ingredients in a saucepan over a slow fire, and stir in a half cup of sifted bread-crumbs, salt, pepper and a bit of nutmeg, moistening with a gill of cream. Make into small, pear-shaped rolls, egg and bread-crumbs them, and fry in boiling dripping. Serve on a mound of mashed potatoes. They may be prepared in the morning, and kept in a cool place until you are ready to fry them.

GERMAN SAUCE.—One gallon of green tomatoes chopped fine, one quart of celery and one quart of onions, both chopped fine, two gills of white mustard seed, one of ground black pepper, one gill whole allspice, one gill whole cloves, three gills salt, one pound of white sugar, three quarts of good cider vinegar, one gallon chopped cabbage. Put the cabbage and tomatoes under pressure over night, and in the morning add two red peppers chopped fine; mix all except the spices together, and boil until quite tender, stirring often. When done, add the spices; stir well, and put into your jars.

STEWED APPLES WITH RICE.—Stewed apples with rice make a simple dessert and very healthful for children. Scoop out the cores and peel some fine russet apples and stew them in clarified sugar; boil some rice in milk with a pinch of salt, a few strips of lemon peel, and sugar enough to sweeten it; leave on the fire until the rice is quite soft and has absorbed nearly all the milk; remove the lemon peel and place in a dish; arrange the stewed apples on the rice, and put in the oven until it is of a pretty golden color.

PEACHES DRIED WITH SUGAR.—Peel yellow peaches; cut them from the stone in one piece; allow two pounds of sugar to six pound of fruit; make syrup of three-quarters of a pound of sugar and a little water; put in the peaches, a few at a time, and let them stand until quite clear; take them up carefully on a dish, and set them in the sun to dry; strew powdered sugar over them on all sides, a little at a time; if any syrup is left, remove them to fresh dishes. When they are quite dry lay them lightly in a jar, with a little sugar sifted between the layers.

SPICKED PLUMS.—Seven pounds plums, one pint cider vinegar, four pounds of sugar, two

tablespoonfuls of broken cinnamon bark, half as much of whole cloves and same of broken nutmeg; place these in a muslin bag and simmer them in a little vinegar and water for half an hour, then add it all to the vinegar and sugar, and bring to a boil; add the plums and boil carefully until they are cooked tender. Before cooking the plums they should be pierced with a darning needle several times; this will prevent the skin bursting while cooking.

COTTAGE OR "POT CHEESE."—Heat sour milk until the whey rises to the top; pour it off, put the curd in a muslin bag and let it drip six hours without squeezing it; put it in a wooden bowl chop fine with a wooden spoon; salt it to taste, and work until it is soft as putty. A little cream or butter will improve it at this stage. Mould it with your hands into round balls, and keep in a cool place. "Pot cheese" is delicious with brown bread and butter, and just a suspicion of red pepper on top.

GRAPE BUTTER.—Stew the grapes and squeeze out each pulp from the skin, removing the seeds; keep the skins in a small, thin bag; to each pound of pulp allow one pound of sugar, half a pint of cider vinegar, teaspoonful of cloves, one of cinnamon and one of nutmeg; boil this very slowly, putting in the bag of skins, tied securely; when it jellies by dropping in cold water it is done. Put away in jars. For an ornamental dish it can be heated over and put in to moulds to jelly.

GRAPE MARMALADE—AMBER COLOR.—Separate the skin and pulp of the grapes, and cook the pulp until the seeds separate; strain it, and to four quarts of pulp add two quarts of sour apples, measured after cooking, the grated rind of three good lemons, and nine pounds of sugar; let it get hot before the sugar is put in, and cook for half an hour after it begins to boil.

SWEDISH JELLY.—Cover a knuckle of veal with water; add a small onion and a carrot, and let the meat boil until it is ready to fall off the bone; take the meat and hash it fine, and return it to the liquor after it is strained and give it another boil till it jellies; add salt, pepper, the juice and rind of a lemon cut fine, and then pour into a form. Put it into a cold place. It makes a nice dish for luncheon or tea. If the knuckle of veal is large, use three quarts of water; if small, two quarts, and let it boil slowly three or four hours, or until it is reduced to about half the quantity of water put in.

HOME TOPICS.

SOME SIMPLE REMEDIES.—A severe cold and perhaps an attack of pneumonia may be prevented if premonitory symptoms are heeded. A chilly sensation along the spinal column, a cold, clammy feeling across the chest, are sure indications that a severe cold is trying to settle in the system.

Pour boiling water upon equal parts of catnip, spearmint, and sassafras; steep, but do not boil the tea. Put the feet in a tub filled with hot water to which a teaspoonful of mustard has been added, and while soaking the feet, drink freely of the tea. Another excellent remedy for a cold is the "vapor bath." Take a pail about half full of hot, but not quite boiling, water, which should be placed under a cane-bottom chair. Seat the patient in the chair and encircle bath-chair and patient with a heavy blanket reaching to the floor. When profuse perspiration starts from every pore, remove from the chair into a bed that has been thoroughly aired and warmed. Additional covering must of course be placed upon the body to prevent a chill.

Simple remedies are within the reach of everyone, and if resorted to in time will save many a dollar in doctor's bills. The money thus saved will prove a blessing to many people who, in order to settle the doctor's claim, are obliged to deny themselves that which is necessary to their comfort.

Cold in the head is not only annoying, but likely to develop into catarrh. One teaspoonful of mustard dissolved in a tumblerful of cold water and used as a gargle three times a day will often effect a speedy cure. In more obstinate cases equal parts of loaf sugar and pulverized alum used as a snuff will give instant relief.

Fever and restlessness in children are frequently caused by indigestion. If you find the skin of the little one hot and dry, remember, if you can, what she ate for supper. Give the child a warm bath, then give it a cup half full of warm water to drink. In a few minutes the undigested food will be thrown off the stomach, and the child will soon be sleeping soundly. A dose of magnesia, about half a teaspoonful, given in the morning before breakfast, will probably restore to the child its usual health, but should fever and nausea continue during the day following the attack, send for a physician, who will undoubtedly approve of what you have done, and should the symptoms develop into scarlet fever, measles, chicken-pox, or any of the diseases to which children are liable, the attack will probably be of a mild nature.

Nearly one-half the population are more or less afflicted with neuralgic pains. Instead of

sending for the doctor, who will probably prescribe a plaster and a dose of medicine, we advise the sufferer to heat a flat-iron, put a double fold of flannel on the painful part, then move the iron to and fro on the flannel. The pain will cease almost immediately. We have seen the most painful cases of neuralgia relieved in less than ten minutes.

Sprains are among the most severe accidents to which we are liable. When a joint is sprained swelling comes on gradually. In dislocation the swelling and loss of motion of the joint happens immediately after the accident. A sprained limb should be kept perfectly quiet. To prevent inflammation, use poultices of wormwood, hops or tansy.

Every effort on the part of the patient to repeat in detail the cause of the accident, the sensations, experience, etc., should be discouraged. Cheerful conversation upon other subjects, and perfect rest, will bring about speedy recovery and strengthen all concerned in the belief that it is not always necessary to send for the doctor.—*Good Housekeeping.*

KEROSENE OIL FOR WASHING CLOTHES.—By the addition of a very small amount of mineral oil to boiling water and soap almost all manual labor in clothes washing may be dispensed with; for at the end of half an hour the clothes will be found so clean that little further is required save to rinse them out in two or three hot and cold waters. The smell of oil is not pleasant during the boiling process; but after the final rinsing no trace of it (it is said) remains, and the clothes are easier to iron. It is equally good for linen, cotton or woollen clothing; it does not affect the color of cotton dresses, or of flannels of any of the ordinary "fast colors"; and it can be used with equal success in a copper or iron boiler, wooden or earthenware tubs. The only precaution to be remembered is to make sure that no careless sloven shall carry her bottle of inflammable and explosive oil to the fireside to pour the oil direct into the boiler, but shall measure the requisite quantity into a cup at a respectful distance. The recipe recommended by a lady in the *Scotsman*, and which has called forth a chorus of thanksgiving from many grateful householders, who find it a perfect success, is to fill an averaged sized boiler—say fourteen gallons—with water, adding half a pound of soft soap, and when this is thoroughly boiling pour in one and a half tablespoonfuls of paraffine. Then put in the clothes in the ordinary course, boil for half an hour; then lift them out and rinse in several waters. Add a little more water, soap and paraffine to make up for evaporation and what is lifted out with each set of clothes. Thus washing is done with a marvelous saving.

CURIOUS AND OTHER MATTERS.

WHERE DO THE DIAMONDS GO?—What becomes of the diamonds is as interesting a question as the one relating to the fate of pins. Here is the fact that these precious stones have been worn as ornaments almost ever since woman conceived that they might adorn nature. They are indestructible and unchangeable; the number of them in existence is constantly being increased, and yet they maintain a steady price, the demand never being less than the supply. One might suppose that, as a diamond is a thing that does not fade nor perish, there would become a glut of them; that everybody might own such a jewel, and that, consequently, the value of them would depreciate. In 1872, there were no less than \$5,000,000 worth of diamonds taken from the fields of South Africa alone, but prices in the market were advanced rather than lessened. Perhaps this is very largely due to the constant American call for diamonds. People in this country take more and more of them every year, and the possession of a stone, large or small, is an object of ambition to nearly all women and to very many men. We are probably the best customers of all the world to the diamond-diggers, and do our proportionate share towards keeping up the value of the gems.

SAVAGES, CANNIBAL AND OTHERWISE, IN FAR SOUTH AFRICA.—There is a general impression that the Patagonian is a giant, writes a correspondent from Putna Arenas to the *San Francisco Chronicle*. I never saw one over five feet ten inches in height, and most of them were much shorter, and on the average stunted. The females have a muscular development equal to the males, and it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between the sexes, owing to the masculine appearance of the gentler sex, the women in most cases sporting an incipient moustache and beard, which on the male never grows very luxuriantly.

Both sexes dress alike. Bleak and cold as the climate is at the best of times, the usual dress consists of the skin of some wild animal loosely wrapped around the body. Little children can be seen running naked over the snow, their well-oiled brown skin apparently impervious to the biting winds.

As the Patagonian tribes are nomadic, their temporary dwellings consist of the branches of trees interwoven so as to form a basket work defence against the weather. Fish, of course, forms the staple food, and it is thought that few inhabitants are in the interior, most living near the sea for the sake of its food and the wreckage which occasionally strews the coast. There is a

story of a crew having succeeded in getting ashore from a stranded vessel and being murdered by the savages, with the exception of the captain's wife, who is said to be still alive in the interior, dragging out a miserable existence as the wife of some dusky chief.

The Patagonians are just one step removed from cannibals, but their neighbors, the Fuegians, are said to enjoy human flesh, and indulge in dreadful orgies over any prisoners or shipwrecked sailors who fall into their hands. The Tierra Del Fuegians represent the lowest type of humanity found on the globe. They have no deity, no moral code, not one custom or habit which can be called intelligent. Of large stature, some imposingly so, they are perfectly brutish in their instincts, without any redeeming attributes which belong to the brute creation.

Tierra Del Fuego, from Magellan to Cape Horn, is a sea of mountains. Wild animals are rare, and the only birds are the albatross, the sea gull and the cape pigeon. Half the missing vessels reported which have to go round the Horn are supposed to be lost on this barren island, and nobody ever lives to tell the tale.

GREAT FEATS OF MEMORY.—Idiots have been known whose memory for names and words were so retentive that they could repeat a sermon verbatim and indicate where the preacher blew his nose and coughed while delivering it.

Cardinal Mazzofanti, the linguist, who is said to have known a hundred languages, declared that he never forgot a word he had once learned.

To a friend who congratulated Leyden on his remarkable memory, he replied that he often found it a source of great inconvenience. On the friend expressing surprise he exclaimed that he had often wished to recollect a particular expression in something he had read, but could not do it until he had repeated the whole passage from the beginning to the expression he desired to recall.

An English clergyman mentions a man who could remember the day of the burial of every person who had died in the parish during thirty-five years, and could also repeat the name and age of each deceased person, and the names of the mourners at his funeral. But so weak was he intellectually that he could not be trusted to feed himself.

Dr. Moffat, the distinguished African missionary and father-in-law of Dr. Livingstone, once preached a long sermon to a crowd of negroes. Shortly after he had finished he saw a number of negroes gather about a simple-minded savage. He went to them and discovered that the savage

was preaching his sermon over again. Not only was he reproducing the precise words, but imitating the manner and gestures of the white preacher.

THE CHANCES OF WARFARE.—A writer in the *Century* magazine recently gave some curious statistics referring to the chances of being hit by a bullet or shell in modern warfare. He quotes an old saying to the effect that "it takes a man's weight in lead to kill him," and he shows by the returns from more than one battle-field that the axiom is literally true. As a case in point, he alludes to the battle of Stone's River, one of the greatest during the American War. In the official report of this battle it is stated that the artillery fired 20,307 rounds of ammunition, representing a weight of 225,000 pounds. The infantry fired two million rounds, being a weight of lead which exceeded 150,000 pounds. These two weights combined are fully equal to the weight of the men killed or mortally wounded, who numbered 2319. Another calculation with regard to this battle takes note of the wounded, and is given in another form. Here it is stated that 20,000 rounds of artillery hit 728 men, and that the two million infantry rounds hit 13,832 men; averaging 27.4 cannon-shots to hit one man, and 145 musket-shots to hit one man. The old adage which states that "every bullet has its billet" would seem, therefore, to require some qualification. It is, at any rate, a comfort to consider that the modern soldier has so many chances against being shot, for, according to these figures, for every bullet which finds its billet, exactly one gross go astray.

REMEMBERING FACES.—There are men, and women too, who do not remember faces at all, and who, if compelled to entertain strangers in the evening, would not know them next day, forgetting their faces as seen under a different light so utterly that evidence of identity hardly convinces them. They simply cannot recollect other things they had seen quite perfectly. The look of the absent has for them perished, and they cannot call it up before them even in a general way, and this sometimes after much association. We would ask those who doubt this to inquire of themselves about a much more striking development of the same peculiarity. Do they or do they not recollect their own faces? They all, when shaving or dressing, see themselves every day; they all care about their own faces, and they all, therefore, ought when they meet themselves to know themselves; but all of them do not. St. James thought none of them did, but he generalized from his personal experience and fell, as generalizers do, into error. A large proportion of mankind—probably half—do not forget their own faces, but know them perfectly well, detect any casual changes in them,

and are aware of likeness to themselves whenever it exists. They would be astounded if they met their "doubles," and would realize at once without further evidence that people who might be taken for them were walking about and might by accident be the involuntary causes of annoying blunders. The remainder, however, forget themselves utterly, instantly, and after the longest possible examination. Surely this wide distinction, which certainly exists, and which anyone can test for himself in his own household, points to special face memory, the absence or presence of which in a witness will account for many otherwise unintelligible conflicts of evidence. Why should the man or woman who does not know his or her own face when he or she sees it be expected to be certain as to the face of an acquaintance? There is absolutely no reason in the nature of things for the one forgetfulness more than for the other, and we may rely upon it that with some men both occur, and that, moreover, differentiating marks are often forgotten, and those marks only, so that a man is honestly ready to swear to an identity which does not exist.

SHOOTING PARROTS.—In Dutch Gulana, where parrots abound in all sizes and colors, parties are sometimes made up for the purpose of having a day's sport shooting these queer birds. They do not sleep in the same place in which they eat, and oftentimes the two places are many miles apart. Parrots always fly in pairs and not in bunches, as pigeons and other birds do. A party starting out for a day's sport would leave town as early as two or three o'clock in the morning, and station themselves on some road, where the trees do not meet overhead, and over which they know the parrots must pass in their flight from their sleeping place to their feeding ground. This latter place may always be known by the large quantity of nut-shells strewn about. The gun mostly used is the old-fashioned muzzle-loading weapon, breech-loaders being very rare in that far-off country. When the parrots pass over the road on which the party is lying in wait, a deafening roar salutes them, and many fall. The rest hasten their speed, and are soon out of reach, mounting high into the air. They feed from the time of their arrival until ten o'clock in the forenoon, after which time the heat becomes terrific, and the birds take to the trees and conceal themselves among the leaves. Perfect silence reigns, and this monotonous state of things continues until about four in the afternoon, at which time the forest becomes fairly alive with the brilliant green cacklers. Then the shooting is rewarded and is kept up until not a parrot is left in the place, those not being killed having flown away. It is only the green bird that lives among the trees, the brilliant and beautiful scarlet bird living in swampy land.

RUTHVEN'S PUZZLE PAGE.

Send all communications for this Department to
EDWIN R. BRIGGS, West Bethel, Oxford
County, Maine.

Answers to August Puzzles.

23.—Subvention.

24.—B C A G C O L O R B A L L O O N G O O S E R O E N	25.—M H E R H I D E S M E D I C A L R E C I T E S A T I N L E N O
---	---

26.—C—heat.

27.—W—heat.

28.—P—rate.

29.—F—ora.

30.—S—tray.

31.—R—estate.

32.—C

C

C O B C R U E L C O U N T E R—C B E T T Y L E Y R	A H A A P A R T H A R M E D A R M E D T E D D
--	--

34.—Demonstrative.

35.—Odoriferous.

36.—Interrogative.

37.—Perpendicular.

38.—Anatomical.

39.—Happy hours.

40.—Gorge-t.

41.—Haw-k.

42.—Impen-d.

43.—Kin-o.

44.—Lose-l.

45.—Misle-d.

63.—A *Charade*.

Should a *first last* to the store,
And return from thence before
Buying for his wife *COMPLETES*,
Which she thinks the best of treats,
He would miss that pleasant kiss,
Once esteemed his greatest bliss.

MAUDE.

Squares.

64.—1 A decree. 2 To rob. 3 To plunder.
4 To destroy. 5 Rolls of lint.

65.—1 A kind of coffee. 2 A large body of
water. 3 Overlays the inner roof. 4 To divide
into two pieces. 5 A kind of goose.

F. S. F.

66.—A *Numerical Enigma*.

The whole, composed of eight letters, is a ver-
ticillate plant, the name of which comprises two
common feminine names, and the first four let-
ters are a beautiful kind of fragrant flowers.

WINIFRED.

Word Synceptions.

67.—Take to perform from a rule in arith-
metic, and leave worth.

68.—Take a number from an omen of ill, and
leave to harbor.

69.—Take a snare from attractive, and leave
sorcery.

70.—Take a spherical body from to cause, and
leave to dread.

71.—Take a tree from a piece of rope for bind-
ing, and leave a large fish of the northern seas.

VERBENA.

Diamonds.

72.—1 A letter. 2 A plant. 3 A league (Geog.)
4. A long platform railroad car. 5 A cutaneous
disease. 6 One of Guido's musical notes. 7 A
letter.

73.—1 A letter. 2 A kin (P. E.). 3 A small
schedule. 4 A ferry boat. 5 A Venitian liquid
measura. 6 A clown. 7 A letter.

MAUDE.

Hidden Names.

74.—A bird built her nest on a tree.

75.—They said it was a myth.

76.—I made a green and red garland.

77.—Sam said: "I dare you to do it."

A. E. GRAVES.

78.—A *Riddle*.

I'm sometimes large, and sometimes small;
Sometimes quite short, and sometimes tall;
And it may seem a queer thought
That ears I have, and can hear not.

BARR.

79.—Numerical Enigma.

The whole, composed of seven letters, is a
bunch of feathers. The 3, 2, 1 is a short sleep.
The 4, 5, 6, 7 is pain.

NELLIE R.

Answers in two Months.

Prizes.

For the largest list of correct answers to this
month's puzzles, received before October 10th,
we offer an illustrated novelette; and for the
next best list, a copy of the "Seaside Library."

Solvers.

Answers to the June puzzles were received
from Amy E. Graves, Captain Poser, J. D. L.,
Cyril Deane, Teddy, I. O. T., Katie Smith, Vin-
nie, Bert Rand, Jack, Ida May, Willie L., Ger-
aldine, Black Hawk, Tom, Ann Eliza, Vixen,
Cora A. L., Birdie Browne, Eulalie, Bridget
McQ., Nicholas, Birdie Lane, Good Hugh and
A. Mary Khan.

Prize-Winners.

Teddy, New Haven, Conn., and Cyril Deane,
Poland, Maine, for the first and second complete
lists of answers.

EDITOR'S DRAWER.

THINGS PLEASANT AND OTHERWISE.

NATURE'S THOUGHTFULNESS.

His wife is back!
No more at night,
When seems the town to him a sombre sight,
Too dull and gray,
May he go forth with paint to make it right.
He's had his day;
His wife is back!
But who is that,
With glossy hat
And step as springy as the step of fawn,
Who leaves at night, returning with the dawn?
It is the other man whose wife's just gone!
He'll see the painting's done!
He'll have the fun!
The town shall never stay
So dull and gray;
His wife has gone!
So gentle Nature makes
A compensation sweet;
She gives for what she takes;
And it is meet!
As where the flower is plucked another springs,
So she's providing for a myriad things.
The town may not be left to stay
All dull and gray;
One wife comes home to-day,
Another goes away!

—Chicago Mail.

HOW SHE ACTS IN THE HORSE CARS.—She stands upon the curb with a little springy up-and-down motion, as if she had spiral springs in the sole of her gaiters. As the car approaches she sticks the point of her colored parasol in the direction of the driver with a small jerk. The car stops. She gives one or two more little springy motions before she leaves the pavement, and then dances to the car.

As she ascends the step, the conductor seems to consider it absolutely necessary to place one of his hands on the small of her back while he rings the bell with the other. She enters the car with the spiral springs still bobbing her up and down; and, as all the seats are full, she stands holding her hands in front of her and gazing off into limitless space, as if the one idea which never could enter it under any possible circumstances, is that some young man will rise and offer her his seat. But a young man in the corner does rise, and immediately the fellow next to him moves quickly into the corner, as if the performance of that manœuvre had formed the subject of his anxious thought during many years of his life.

To get a corner seat would seem to be the chief end of man.

When the young man rises, the young woman suddenly becomes conscious that there is something nearer to her than the horizon, and she gives two or three more little bounces, and says: "Keep your seat!" The young man is embarrassed, and says he is going to get out soon, whereupon the fair being dances toward the seat, sinks into it, and pretends that the fact of the existence of any young man who once occupied that seat, and who is going to get out, has entirely faded out of her consciousness. She smoothes down her dress and its supplemental frippery, flounces and pennants, and again looks far beyond the confines of the car into emptiness.

She knows she is expected by the other women in the car to remain unconscious of their presence while they study her clothes. They immediately begin. They stare at her dress, her sack, her hat, her black hair, her jewelry, her gloves, her bows and ribbons, her miscellaneous millinery, until the entire costume is photographed in their memories, and price estimated, and a critical opinion formed, and resolution to have a bonnet of the same kind, or a "body" cut upon the same pattern.

When the young lady thinks that this examination is concluded, she becomes conscious again, and begins to look around and see how the other women are dressed. She examines each one in detail, and in a few minutes she is in possession of all the necessary information.

Presently a young man with whom she is acquainted gets into the car, and stands clutching the strap and trying in vain to keep in a graceful attitude while he converses with her. All the women begin to wonder whether she cares particularly for him—and, as she knows their thoughts, she is so distant that the young man becomes more embarrassed than ever, and makes renewed struggles to maintain a graceful position. When she wishes to get out, she rises, smoothes down her frippery again, indulges in two or three springs, and dances along the platform. The conductor again considers it imperatively necessary to press the small of her back. She dances down the steps, dances to the pavement, and then dances along the street, fully aware of the fact that the women in the car have all turned round to look at her, and serenely confident in the assurance that she has on good clothes which fit her splendidly. As she disappears, the conductor turns to the man who is smoking a cigar on the platform, and remarks that she is "a crusher."

The Rev. J. G. Wood, the celebrated English naturalist, who came to this country some months ago for the purpose of studying American animals and bugs, has just made an exhaustive study of the sea serpent. He has traced this wonderful animal through a period of a century and a quarter, and at many different places. He finds that the serpent's first authentic appearance was in Penobscot Bay, in 1751, where it was again seen 1778. In 1780 it appeared at Marshfield, but never visited that town after Daniel Webster made it his place of residence. In 1802 it returned to Penobscot Bay after six visits within eighteen years. In 1808 it made its first appearance on the coast of England, but by 1815 it had come back to the fishing station at Gloucester, Mass. By the new generation it was seen every few years at Gloucester and Nahant. Between 1849 and 1875 he was not once visible, since which period he has made his appearance annually at every seaside resort on the Atlantic coast.

Skeptics have uniformly alleged that this strange animal was the product of the liquor found at summer boarding houses. But here is a naturalist and a clergyman who came to this country in the winter season, and, after due investigation, announces his belief in the serpent. This ought to have made the coast more attractive than ever this summer, and especially as it has been demonstrated that the serpent not only belongs to one of the oldest families, but that it has been traced back as a full-grown animal to the year 1751. It is plain that the Rev. J. G. Wood has done a great service in thus tracing the pedigree and achievements of this immortal stroller of the seas.—*Philadelphia Times*.

He had been paying attention to her for a long time and he seemed to be slow in putting into practice any of the beautiful theories of love, and domestic comfort, and all that sort of thing with which he had beguiled the happy hours very often. She thought she might bring him to the scratch, but she did not want to make it altogether too plain. She thought that under a kind of allegory she might fetch him. So the next time he came up he found her in the garden reclining in a hammock. A book, open, was lying beside her, her hand carelessly resting upon it. The other hand was gracefully posed pressing her back hair. Her eyes were fixed dreamily on the cloudless blue seen through the interlaced foliage of the tree. He approached. Apparently she heard him not. He looked at the picture a moment, while she was steeped in reverie. He spoke. She gave a little start and gently rubbed her eyes. "It is you, George, is it?" she said, softly. "I was dreaming." "Dreaming! And what were you dreaming of?" "It was silly—ridiculous. I won't tell you." "Do tell me." "No, I won't. It was

so silly." "Do tell me what it was." "Well, you won't laugh at me?" she said coyly. "No, indeed I won't." "I dreamed that I was married, and was living in a pretty little cottage all covered with honey-suckle and woodbine and roses, and my husband"—"What was he like?" "He was a very nice looking man. He had beautiful dark hair and eyes, and he was tall." George made no remark. George was a blonde and short. "But, you know, George," she said, after the pause had grown a little awkward, "dreams always go by contraries." George saw the point.—*San Francisco Chronicle*.

The "Five Alls" was at one time a very common tavern sign in England. It consisted of five human figures, each accompanied by a motto. The first was a king, in full regalia, with the legend, "I govern all"; the second a bishop in pontificals, with the motto, "I pray for all"; the third, a lawyer in his gown, with the motto, "I plead for all"; the fourth, a soldier in regimentals, with the motto, "I fight for all"; and the fifth, a poor countryman with scythe and rake, having for motto, "I pay for all."

Lester, of the Brunswick (Mo.) *News*, furnishes the following, which he says is reliable:—

I got a new subscriber to-day. When I answered his knock at the door, he sailed in, removed his hat from his woolly head, and remarked:—

"Is dis de newspaper shop?"

I told him it was.

"An' is you de boss fo'eman of de wuks?"

I satisfied my colored visitor that I ran the ranch, and he continued:—

"I fetch in some 'bacca to-day, an' I promised Ebaneezah—dat's my eldest chile—I promised dat boy I'd prescribe for a paper. He kin read, he kin, an' he's allers pesterin' de old ooman an' me for books an' papers. I s'pose we orter 'curridge de chille's dispensary. How d'ye sell yo' papers?"

"Dollar and a half a year."

"All de same price?"

"Yes."

"Let me observe one, ef you please sah."

I handed him a paper, and he unfolded it, upside down, scanning it critically on both sides.

"Look like dar war a sight o' letterin' in dat. I done forgot my spectacles dis mornin', an' I can't prezactly see if it's de 'Merican language."

"It is American."

"In de democratic or 'publican branch, sah?"

"Republican."

"Dat's de kind ob a book Ebaneezah graduated in, an' I s'pose dis paper 'ud suit him well as enny. Dollah an' a half a yeah, you say, sah? How much is dat a month?"

"About a bit."

"I'se not de man to min' expense whar de propah eddicatin' of my chillun is consarned. I hol' dat it's a pusson's duty to cultivate his outspring to the 'stent ob his 'ableness. Prescribe de name of Ebaneezah Snow on yo' books. Dat's it. Ef you'd jes' put a few pictur's in Eb's paper it 'ud please de chillun mightily. Here's six cents, sah. Send de paper 'long, an' if it gibs satisfaction I'll drap in an' prescribe foh a full month. Good-mornin', sah."

A commercial traveler, belated for the night in an Irish village, knocks up the proprietor of the only hotel he can discover. The landlord tells him it is impossible to find him a room, as he and his family occupy all the sleeping accommodation in the house. "But surely you can make a shakedown somewhere just for a few hours? I must be off by the six o'clock train in the morning." Pat retires to consult his better half, and shortly after returns to say they have managed to make up a bed in the parlor. The traveler thankfully accepts the make-shift, and asks to be called half an hour before the train starts, and that breakfast be then ready. Next morning the commercial traveler is awakened at what seems to him a much earlier hour than he requested. "What time is it?" inquires he. "Getting-up-time, sorr." "What time's that?" "Nearly five o'clock, sorr." "But I said half-past five would be soon enough." "Right you are, sorr; but we want to get your breakfast ready." "Well, get it ready, and don't bother me for another hour." "More strength to you, sorr, and I wish we could, but when master made the bed last night there was only one sheet, and we made shift for the other with the table-cloth!"

A rather amusing episode occurred recently between a Free Church minister in Lanarkshire, Scotland and his baker, who happened to be a member of his church. The minister called to say that "the store" was selling its bread a penny cheaper, and, as he must buy in the cheapest market, he would close his account with the baker. Not to be outdone, the baker sent on Saturday night, while the church was being cleaned, and removed his cushions and his books, and procured two of a certain minister's sermons for twopence. On Monday morning the clergyman entered hurriedly. "Good-morning, Mr. B. Is anything wrong—anybody ill, or what?" Baker, placidly: "Naething that I ken o'. We're a' weel enuech, so far as I am aware." Clergyman, with a gasp: "Ah, I am glad to hear it! But you are such regular attendants at church, and, as the pew was quite empty yesterday, I was afraid; so I called to see." Baker: "Oh, that's naething! Ye see ye hae begun a new arrangement about buying the bread that perisheth elsewhere, sae I thoct

I wad begin a new system for the supply o' my spiritual bread. Sae we had a kirk o' oor ain at hame yesterday, an' we had tippence-worth o' Mr. Jones—maist refreshin'—an' a'thegither we had a real nice quiet day withoot troublin' the kirk. An' ye see it's a hantle cheaper, for we can get the Gospel cheaper at hame ilka Sabbath for the tippence without troublin' ye. We're just buyin' oor Gospel as ye buy yer bread—in the cheapest market."

Judge Gary was hearing a case that called for a jury trial, and after the usual wrangling that always tries his patience the jury was settled and sworn. The judge settled back in his chair, thinking that the case was fairly started, when up jumped a little German who was sitting in one end of the jury box. "Shudge," he exclaimed. "Well, what is it?" asked the judge, shortly. "Shudge, I tink I like to go home." "You can't go; sit down?" "Shudge, I doan tink I make a goed shuror." "You're the best in the panel. Sit down!" "Well, Shudge," and the little fellow was getting desperate, "I doan' speak good English. And, Shudge, I can't make noding out of vot dose fellers (indicating the attorneys) are talking about." "That's no excuse. Neither can anyone else. Sit down!"

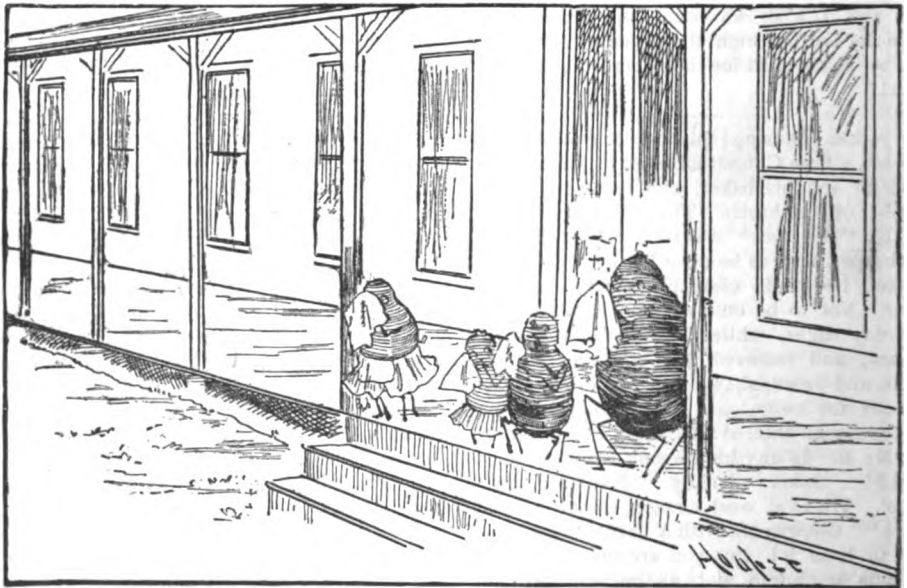
It is sometimes said that a man's sincerity of purpose is proved if he puts his hand in his pocket-book. Certainly the following anecdote proves this. He was a stingy man, and sat listening to a charity sermon. As he was nearly deaf, he was accustomed to sit facing the congregation, directly under the pulpit, with his ear-trumpet directly upward toward the preacher. The sermon that day moved him. He had a habit of communing aloud with himself; and, as the sermon proceeded, he said, "I'll give ten dollars." Then he said, "I'll give fifteen." At the close of the appeal he was greatly affected, and declared he would give fifty dollars; but, when the boxes began their rounds, his generosity quickly oozed away. He came down from fifty to twenty, to ten, to five, and finally said, "I guess I won't give anything to-day." As the box moved nearer to him, he again soliloquized, "Yet this won't do. Who knows how much may depend on this? This covetousness may be my ruin." The box was coming nearer and nearer. The crisis was upon him. What should he do? The box was under his chin—the congregation looking. He had been holding his pocket-book in his hand during his soliloquy, which, unconsciously to himself, had been audible to his near neighbors. At the final moment he took his pocket-book and laid it in the box, saying, as he did so, "Now squirm, old natur'!"

A young man had asked Mr. Jones for the hand of his daughter, and a pang wrung his

fatherly heart as he looked at the youth for some moments in silence and thought of the bitterness of parting with his well-beloved child. "I suppose, Oliver," he said, at last, "it is only natural and right that when the young birds have become old enough to fly they should leave their paternal nest and go off with their chosen mates to build nests of their own; and yet it hurts, Oliver—it hurts when I think of one of my fledgelings getting ready to fly away." "This seems to be a good-sized nest," suggested the young man, anxious to soften the blow. "Perhaps you'd rather have me and Elvira stay with you?"

A well-known New Yorker has had an adventure which discounts by about ten thousand, nine hundred and ninety-nine the average conventional parrot-story. He was fond of knocking about in out-of-the-way quarters of the world, and left ship on the central American coast with a party of comrades to explore the wilderness. During a cruise of several months the entire ship's company—a merry crew—had devoted their odd hours in singing to a parrot. The sailors had lost no opportunities, and taught the bird all the seafaring lingo, and a few more or less elegant expletives besides. When the

exploring party had bidden the bird and the sailors good-by, they plunged into the heart of the tropical forest. After twenty-eight miles of mortal effort, they reached their camping-place for the night. Just as the sun was going down they were startled to hear in the primeval silence a familiar voice calling down from the top of a tall palm, "Avast there! Yo, heave, ho!" It was the ship's parrot. But before they could recover their startled senses, the faithful bird, having flown ahead to prepare this unexpected treat for its chums of the voyage, fluttered down to the top of a dead stump near by, and, with a shrill call, summoned thousands of the little green paroquets of the country. It is said that eleven thousand of them were counted, as they circled around the great gray African oracle on the stump, and finally took their places on the ground row after row. The explorers looked on in dumb amusement. When the feathered assemblage became quiet, the ship's parrot burst into the words of a familiar song, and, to the inextinguishable laughter of the travelers, the consternation of the rest of the tropical world, and the delight of the festive precentor, the whole of the eleven thousand paroquets, with one mighty burst of song, broke into "Nancy Lee."



Mournful chorus of permanent occupants of summer hotels:

"All, all are gone, the old, familiar faces."



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A STORY.

BY CHRISTOPHER SMITH.

CHAPTER I.

IT was not on a first impulse, but after due reflection, that I, George Dunning, articled clerk in the office of Messrs. Bustler & Clark, solicitors, decided on retaining the bank-note which I had found behind my desk.

My first impulse, I need hardly say, was to carry it to one of the firm, with an explanation of the way in which I had discovered it. For the money was certainly not mine, and I hope I was a sufficiently honest man, if I was a poor one, to scout the idea of keeping what did not belong to me. So, as I say, my first thought was to carry it to one of my chiefs the earliest thing next morning, and to relate how, moving my desk in a search after a favorite pen which had slipped between it and the wall, I had come upon this Bank of England note amid the dust and scraps there accumulated.

Thinking it out thus, I again scrutinized the valuable scrap of tissue paper in my hand. Upon first finding it, I had thought it some such trash as Tom, our office boy, was accustomed to purchase in the street. Tom was forever buying cheap penknives which would not cut; cheap cast-iron cannons which burst at the first discharge. And a favorite bargain of Tom's was to spend a penny in a curious assortment of useless articles, including four brass rings, a sham breastpin, a counterfeit sovereign, a printed puzzle, and a note for five pounds on the "Bank of Elegance." Therefore, I

thought my treasure trove might be one of Tom's precious Bank of Elegance notes.

Yet it was no sham paper money, but a veritable Promise to Pay, signed on behalf of the Governor and Company of the national establishment. Number 7,482; and for five hundred pounds.

Trembling with the hope of so sudden an accession to fortune—more wealth than I had ever owned at once—and with the fear of losing it as suddenly, I re-opened the safe which it was my duty to lock at night, and took out the bill-book. Herein I knew the numbers of all bank-notes were entered which passed through the hands of the firm. If number 7,482 had ever belonged to Bustler & Clark during the last five years, I should find a record of it in a special portion of the bill-book apportioned to Bank of England notes. I ran my eye down the money columns, looking out for five hundred pounds. A chill sense of disappointment struck me as I came upon the entry opposite a date of some eighteen months back. Number 7,482 had passed through the hands of Bustler & Clark. Moreover it stood recorded as having been paid away to William Wyld; and there was a marginal note attached: "See letter of instruction from Theophilus Langbrace, Esquire," with number and date quoted.

Here was a mystery at the outset. Number 7,482 had been paid to William Wyld eighteen months ago, and yet I held it in my hand. I hunted up the letter of instruction referred to, among the tied up corre-

spondence of a couple of years back. The entry was correct. I found the letter of Theophilus Langbrance, one of the firm's clients, authorizing Messrs. Bustler & Clark to pay William Wylde the sum of five hundred pounds, "in discharge of all claims" on Theophilus Langbrance, and further requiring Messrs. Bustler & Clark to obtain Wylde's receipt in full for the amount.

I remembered Wylde now. A shabby actor, who filled secondary parts at a transpontine theatre, and who frequented a tavern at which our office boy, Tom, was too often seen. It was in Tom's presence that I had met Wylde, in whom I saw little to admire, or even to tolerate. A boastful, truculent man he seemed at the best, much given to dissipation, and to an inordinate estimation of his own abilities, which were more potent to himself than to the manager. He had married, as I learnt from Tom on the first introduction, above his station; in fact, it was said that his wife had been a lady, the daughter of our client Theophilus Langbrance. How Wylde's vulgar manner and loud assertiveness had fascinated her was a mystery which the poor lady would never answer now, for she was dead. It had been an ill-assorted union; and Wylde, who had received some assistance from his father-in-law during his wife's lifetime, fell into worse ways after her death, and grew more dissipated and more arrogant.

This, then, was the person for whom the note for five hundred pounds had evidently been intended, and who appeared in our books as having received Number 7,482. That he had never come into possession of his due, the obvious gift of his father-in-law, was proved by the note in my possession. The mystery was not to be cleared up that night, it was certain; so I determined to wait till next day and question Old Graham.

CHAPTER II.

OLD GRAHAM was a clerk in the employment of Bustler & Clark, a fellow-worker of mine, with whom we younger fellows had little communion. He was a shy, little, broken-down, prematurely old man, whose retiring habits and general timorousness left nothing in common between him and the rest, and who made few acquaintances.

The younger men spoke of Old Graham with a half-pitying, half-contemptuous tone, as one whose ways of life did not consort with the ardent spirits who enjoyed existence on eighty pounds a year. I believe I understood the old man best of all my colleagues. We were good friends, for beneath that shy and shambling exterior he possessed a kind heart, and he had a treasure in his home of which the rollicking young bloods of Bustler & Clark never dreamt. I alone could estimate that treasure. I alone was a welcome guest in the modest ground-floor at Kennington, and knew how much beauty and gentle worth were represented in Kate Graham. My intimacy with her father taught me this, and the knowledge soon brought a warmer feeling. Seeing how dear she was to him, I had come to hope for a time when I should supplant him in her care and love. I knew that I was welcome in the household, and I left the rest to time and constancy. As matters stood, I was too poor to marry, until the discovery of the five hundred pound note awakened a hope which I determined should only be realized according to the dictates of strict honesty.

At nine o'clock on the morning after the discovery, old Graham appeared at the desk, punctual as St. Paul's. I entered into a careless conversation, and at last broached the subject of the payment to Wylde.

"You have been in the office a long time, Mr. Graham," I said; "do you happen to remember a man who used to come about here named, if I remember right, Wylde—William Wylde?"

He turned a cadaverous color, and his fingers wandered aimlessly to his scanty hair.

"What—what do you know about Wylde?" he asked, in his timid manner.

"I? Oh, very little; I know he is an actor, that's all. He used to get money paid him on behalf of one of our clients, did he not?" I answered, carelessly.

"I—I don't know; it is not in my department. I don't pay money. I never heard of him," said Graham, nervously.

"No, I suppose not. Perhaps Mr. Murden will know," I replied.

Mr. Murden was our cashier. The old man grew more agitated than before.

"You had better not ask him," he ventured, hastily. "Mr. Murden does not like to be troubled with such—with these aimless

questions. What business is it of yours?"

"Oh, none; I merely asked. Then he did get the money?" I pursued, pointedly.

"Yes, yes, of course—at least, I don't know; I never heard of him; it is not my department. Go to your desk."

It was evident he did know, but would not tell. Under his nervous, shambling manner that fact was apparent. Equally apparent was it that nothing could be got out of him further than what he had unconsciously disclosed. I bothered him no more, but went on with my daily work; and towards evening, when the office was closing, I approached him again.

"Are you going straight home, Mr. Graham?" I asked.

"Yes, George, yes; I am going home."

"If you have no objections, I will walk that way with you."

"Certainly; I—I shall be glad. Of course, George; come with me, by all means."

We walked towards old Graham's house at Kennington, discoursing on indifferent topics. I was careful not to alarm him with too hasty a reference to the subject of the morning, for I knew his nature, and how liable he was to take fright, and how reticent he could be if sharply questioned. Besides, I did not care to offend him; the regard of his daughter was too valuable for that.

She met us at the door, with a kiss for her father and a warm smile for me. What a bright-eyed, glad-hearted, little divinity she was!

After tea her father left us for a moment together. It was an opportunity not to be lost, if I would learn whether she knew anything of what was evidently within old Graham's knowledge, and what he would not disclose.

I drew my chair close to hers. "Kate," I began, "I want to ask you something in confidence."

She moved back hastily. "I am afraid, George, we mustn't have any confidences—at least, if they are very particular."

"Why, Kate, dear?" I asked, in some astonishment. "What do you mean?"

"Oh, don't call me that," she cried, in a distressed way; "there must be no more of that between you and me."

"But Kate! are we not good friends?"

"Oh yes, yes; but friends only. Don't look so unhappy; I didn't mean to wound

you; but indeed, indeed you must be more guarded, for your own sake and mine, in the feeling with which you regard me."

"Guarded! Good heavens, why?"

"Because," answered Kate, with a sob which she strove hard to stifle, "because I am going to be married."

In the suddenness with which the blow fell upon me, I did not notice that the door had opened, and that a tall, sallow-faced man stood contemplating us. A harsh, sneering voice woke me from my misery.

"It is well you have made the announcement to our young friend here," said the new-comer, sarcastically; "it is well that he, and all such interlopers, should know they are trespassing when they make free with my property."

I started up in undisguised trepidation.

"Your property, Mr. Murden!" I cried.

"Do you mean to say that *you* are going to—that you have the right to say this?"

I had never liked our sallow-faced cashier; at that moment I positively hated him. His features might have been handsome but for a sneer which always played on them when he spoke, and a look of unhappiness which sat on them when he was silent—evidently an ill-natured man, whose temper tormented himself as much as it annoyed others.

"I don't know about the right, my young friend," said Mr. Murden, grimly, "but I have the power, which is quite sufficient. Tell this fellow the same, Kate, and let him go."

She was too deeply agitated to confirm his insolent words, as I looked at her with a heavy heart. The cashier swung himself into a chair and admired the big check pattern on his legs. "Well," he asked, suddenly, "why don't you go?"

"I don't recognize your right, sir, to demand it. You are not yet the master in this house. If Miss Graham here wishes"—

"No, no, George," she cried, tearfully; and added, in an undertone, "Don't leave me with him."

She did not love him, then; there was some chilly comfort in that. I smiled and sat down.

"If you don't make a clearing, I'll let you see whether I'm master or not," exclaimed Murden, his evil face darkening.

At that moment old Graham re-entered the room.

"Oh, you're here at last, are you?" cried Murden. "What do you mean by letting

this insolent fellow overrun the house and poison the ear of your daughter?"

The nervous old man trembled. "I didn't—didn't mean—you know George Dunning, sir."

"Know George Dunning," Murden, answered, with a sneer. "Yes, I do know George Dunning. I know he is not an associate I should choose for my wife."

The coarseness of his manner, even more than the insolence of his words, stung Kate in the midst of her agitation.

"I am not your wife yet, Mr. Murden," she exclaimed, "and never will be if this tone continues. You are harsh, cruel, impertinent; you have not the right to treat me so, and I *won't* be so treated! Don't speak to me father; I would do anything for you—make any sacrifice; but I cannot forego all self-respect."

Her magnificent scorn lighted up her face with a beauty I had never seen there before. Murden was cowed for a moment, and then rose from his chair in suppressed rage.

"Oh, very good," he said, between his teeth; "I'll leave you to entertain your friends here with your tragedy airs. As for you, Mr. Graham," turning to the trembling old man, "we can settle this matter between us quietly. You know where to find me. My lodgings are in Wylde Street, number seven thousand, four hundred and eighty two. The same as before; *I never move.*"

The words, spoken with significant emphasis, struck us like a knell. On me they fell with startling effect, coming after the discovery of the last night. What could they mean? Before I could recover, he was gone.

"O Kate, Kate," cried the father, "you have ruined me! What have you done? how could you?" and he shambled out after Murden, in manifest trepidation.

I heard him overtake the cashier in the passage, and I distinguished Murden's angry voice. I turned to Kate, who was pale and weeping.

"Kate, what does all this signify? Why are you going to marry that man? What does he mean by his reference to Wylde and seven thousand four hundred and eighty-two?"

"Hush, hush, George; never say those words. Oh, listen! are they quarreling?"

I stole to the door and listened. They were speaking under their voices, but their excitement made some of the words audible.

I heard the old man murmur, "As heaven bears witness above us, I never stole the money."

"I know nothing about that," replied the cashier's scoffing voice; "I only know it never reached its destination, and I know the worth of the receipt I hold."

"And you swear to give it back to me?"

"On the day when you fulfill your part of the bargain."

I closed the door softly and returned to Kate. "Tell me one thing, Kate. This Wylde—this money?"

"If you love me, George," she cried in terror, "never speak of Wylde or of money. You do not know the danger you might bring down on my father's head and mine."

"Well, I will not speak of it," I answered, calmly; "but tell me something else. You do not love the man who has left us?"

"Love him!"

"And yet you are about to marry him?"

"I must; I cannot help myself. You do not know."

"Kate, dearest Kate! if this danger were removed, if this man's spite—for it is spite which animates him, not love—were nullified, if he could work neither you nor your father any harm, would you, could you be brought to love somebody else?"

She sobbed, but did not reply. I took her yielding hand in mine; I kissed away her tears; and her father, returning, found us thus.

She glided to his side, hung over him, smoothed his gray hair, and murmured she would do anything in the world for his sake. It was no scene for an onlooker, and without a farewell I stole out into the night air to cool my brain and to think.

CHAPTER III.

THE sharp evening air and a brisk walk homeward stimulated reflection, and I began to go over the scene I had just witnessed, and to decide upon my next action. Events had conspired to elucidate the mystery of Number 7,482, but much remained yet unrevealed. That Wylde had never received the note, or any equivalent for it, was pretty certain from the first. That old Graham was cognizant of some fraud which had kept Wylde out of the money—and perhaps had originated the fraud—was evident from his manner, and from the hold which

Murden possessed over him. The riddle that remained was, to what extent was Graham implicated? He had not stolen the money, for it lay in my pocket. He could not have hidden it in a place where it was so likely to be found and betray him. Then, again, Murden had spoken of a receipt, which old Graham seemed anxious to regain, and the delivery of which was to be made contingent on Murden's marrying Kate. That receipt was evidently irregular, and its irregularity in some fashion compromised the old clerk. So long as it remained in Murden's possession, the cashier held an engine by which he could force the feeble old man into compliance with his wishes.

Walking briskly and thinking deeply, I came upon a dingy public-house, which I remembered as the haunt of Wylde, the place where I had seen him in company with Tom. I determined to satisfy myself fully on a point upon which I felt morally convinced already—namely, that Wylde had never received the money intended for him by Theophilus Langbrace, Esquire, our client. With this view I entered the Four-in-Hand, by which name the house of call for actors was known.

Making my way into the parlor, I recognized through a haze of tobacco smoke my roystering friend Tom, engaged in what he was wont to term cultivating the muses—in other words, keeping up a smoking and drinking intercourse with half a dozen very shady "utility" actors.

That ardent young gentleman hailed me boisterously. "Halloo, George, my pippin! Come to life? Sit down and have a spider."

Declining the entomological beverage referred to, I contented myself with ordering a less elaborate liquid, and asked Tom if he had seen his friend Wylde.

"What, Guglielmo?" answered Tom. "He'll be here presently; he's on in the second piece as a Gory Ruffian. He gets murdered in the fourth act, and will probably drop in then."

In about an hour's time he appeared, not so drunk as usual, for the night was comparatively early—hardly eleven o'clock. He had only taken sufficient to produce the first of many stages of intoxication through which that accomplished artist was nightly wont to pass. In his first stage he was jubilant and loquacious.

On recognizing us, Mr. William Wylde struck a dignified attitude and burst into

quotation, after the manner of his tribe. 'Eyeing me sternly, and then lifting his eyebrows up to his hair, he said, dramatically:—

"Came you from Padua, from Bellario?"

"From both, my lord; Bellario greets your grace," answered that imp Tom, readily.

Mr. Wylde smiled loftily and closed his eyes. "Which," he inquired, "which is the merchant here, and which the Jew?"

I modestly replied that for myself I inclined to mercantile pursuits in preference. Mr. Wylde waved his hand. "Then must the Jew be merciful." Whereupon he took a seat and ordered refreshment.

It is unnecessary to relate by what degrees Mr. Wylde attained his ulterior condition of intoxication; how he passed from the jubilant to the noisy stage, thence to the desponding stage, thence to the fiercely morose stage. Suffice it to say that I kept him well supplied with his favorite refreshment, and we grew confidential.

"I'll tell you what, my boy," said Mr. Wylde, when he had reached the depths of melancholy, "if ever you think of embracing our profession, think well. Think twice. It's a sickening life. Genius may starve in it. Genius is not patronized as it should be. Look at me. What keeps me down? I've had experience enough; I know my business; there's not another man in the company that can beat me at versatility. I've played Jeremy Diddler, Romeo, and Long Tom Coffin in one bill. I'm not a fool. What, then, keeps me back? I'll tell you. It's combinations. It's professional jealousy. It's cliques. That's what it is, my boy."

"Yet you have done well in your time," I urged. "For example, you married well."

Mr. Wylde shook his head mournfully.

"I married, sir, a lady of family. She was not clever, but I waived that. She brightened my home for a spell; but she is gone. 'After life's fitful fever she sleeps well.'"

"And your wife's family?"—

"My wife's family, sir," broke out Wylde, wrathfully, "are not to be mentioned by friends of mine. A set of curmudgeons—an ungrateful brood. Why, they are base, common and popular."

"Did they never recognize your abilities?"

"Never. A set of arrogant, stuck-up, conceited—but there. Pah!"

"It is said," I remarked, confidentially—"it is said in legal circles (you know how rumors get about among us lawyers), that after your wife's death her father came down with something solid."

"It's a lie, then," returned Mr. Wylde, concisely.

"Did you ever get a remittance from him—about a year, or a year and a half ago?"

"Remittance, egad! I'd like to see the old scrow come down with a postage-stamp. It wasn't for the want of asking, though. By Jupiter, I tried all I know; but the old flint was not to be come over."

"Then the rumor about your getting five hundred pounds was false?"

"False!"

"I thought so," was my reply; "I never gave it any credence myself. Good-night, Wylde. I think you've been badly used; but never mind, your peculiar talents will find their due yet."

I bade him farewell, and went my way thoroughly convinced of what I had guessed all along, that he had never received the money's worth of Number 7,482.

Next morning I wrote an urgent letter to Kate, praying her to meet me in a quiet city square at one o'clock; telling her briefly that I had a way by which I could probably benefit her father and herself, and on which I wished to confer with her. This letter I despatched by hand. In the office I took no notice of either Murden or Graham, but went about my duties quietly. On their parts they were equally reserved, and nothing of importance transpired until dinner-time. Then I slipped out, and went to the place of rendezvous to meet Kate.

I found her waiting for me, troubled but possessed. I besought her, in as few and forcible words as I could command, to tell me the story of her father's implication with the bank-note business, and the extent to which he was committed to Murden. I told her that I had the means of freeing him from any pecuniary liability under which he had fallen; but, before putting into operation the means at my command, I must know how he stood, and what was the danger threatening him. I urged that my love for her gave me the right to ask this, and that the same love was the guarantee that I would only use the knowledge for her father's good.

After some hesitation, and exacting many promises, she told me with such reluctance

as was natural to a pure and loving girl forced to acknowledge a father's guilt. The story dated eighteen months back from the day on which the letter of instruction had arrived from Theophilus Langbrace, Esquire, authorizing Messrs. Bustler & Clark to pay Wylde five hundred pounds. On that day it was a national festivity, and the office was to be closed early. Murden, the cashier, wishing to get away for a private engagement, had handed a bank-note for five hundred pounds to the oldest clerk, Graham, with a memorandum of Wylde's address, and directions to pay the money to him personally, and obtain his receipt for it on a printed form which the firm kept for payments generally; the words being added in writing, "in discharge of all claims." This bank-note had lain on Graham's desk until the clerks were preparing to leave the office. The old clerk had just recovered from a nervous attack to which he was subject, and which, as Kate said, was wont to impair his memory. The bustle of preparing for the half-holiday, superadded to the feebleness of his mental powers consequent on his illness, had caused him utterly to forget his commission. The bank-note had been tossed aside, and had apparently fallen into the waste-paper basket close to his desk. At three o'clock, the gas was turned off (there had been a dense fog all day in the city, necessitating lights); and the clerks emerged in high spirits at their release, Graham accompanying the rest. On the stairs one of them asked for a light for his pipe; but nobody had matches. Old Graham good-naturedly volunteered to go back and get a bit of paper, so that the clerk could light his pipe at a gas burner on the staircase lower down; and making his way back into the office, he found in the yellow obscurity the waste-paper basket, and twisted into a pipe-light the first bit of tissue-paper that came to hand. The clerk lit his pipe, and playfully thrust the extinguished bit of paper into Graham's face. The old clerk received it in his hand, unconsciously retained it, walked a few yards homeward still holding it and then, wondering what he was carrying, opened out the folds. To his dismay, he found in the charred fragment of tissue-paper a corner of the bank-note which he now remembered he ought to have paid to William Wylde!

The shock of the discovery paralyzed him, and when sense returned he saw himself in

imagination a ruined man, discharged from his situation if not prosecuted by his employers, and turned with his daughter Kate, into the streets for the trifle of rent he owed. He had always been a moral coward; and his fear of consequences made him blindly accept the one dangerous loophole of escape offered to him. He had not the courage to confess his negligence and throw himself on the mercy of the firm; he took a fatal step, and from carelessness passed into crime. After much bewildered cogitation with himself (for Kate knew nothing of his misfortune till long after), he decided upon pretending to have paid the money to William Wylde, and producing a fictitious receipt from that worthy.

But forgery belongs to the fine arts, and old Graham was a sad blunderer, being only a novice in the accomplishment. Perhaps it was this inexperience which betrayed him—perhaps Murden discovered the true state of the case, from subsequent application for money made by Wylde. At all events, the wretched old man was soon found out, and the cashier's sharp questioning wrung the truth out of him. The knowledge Murden kept for his own use. Affecting to discredit the story of the accidental discovery of the note, he persisted in regarding Graham as a thief as well as a forger. Thus playing on his terror and misery, and intensifying the self-reproaches of the old clerk with the cruellest sarcasm, he brought him into a state of abjectness, which left the miserable man an easy prey in his hands. Then Murden struck a keen and bitter bargain. He would keep the defalcation a secret from the firm on one condition, the possession of Kate.

How soon the bargain was ratified by the unhappy girl herself, I had to supply out of my own knowledge, for here her story broke down in utter grief; but I knew her absorbing love for her father, and her self-sacrifice on all occasions where he was concerned. I could understand the sharpness of the struggle before she yielded. Not until her father had told her how fully he was compromised did she consent to part with her own happiness to save him from a felon's doom. Then she gave up all hope in a fair future, and accepted the man she hated, her father's enemy and tyrant, as her promised husband.

Here her pitiful tale ended. How was I to comfort her? I could not tell her that

the note was not destroyed, as her father thought; that I held it, though by what means it had escaped or what had been burnt in its place, I failed to guess. For though the money itself was safe, the receipt yet remained in Murden's hands, and any attempt at an *éclaircissement* would only bring down detection on her father's head. I could only murmur some commonplaces of sympathy and consolation, assure her that I hoped to foil Murden, and re-establish her father's peace of mind. And so I left her.

That evening I again sought out Wylde, and found him at his usual haunt, and in his usual state. Diplomatically, and with much circumlocution, I worked the conversation round to the subject of money, and my gentleman's claims upon his father-in-law. Mr. Wylde's present mood was less violent than ordinary, but more bitterly despondent.

"What's the use of trusting to that old buffer?" he asked, dejectedly. "I was once led to believe he would come down with a round sum if I applied to his lawyers."

"When was that?"

"That was— Let me see. Thirteen months ago on the first of this month. Ha, no matter. He knew my weak point, a malison be on his caitiff soul. I was in difficulties at that time; I am in difficulties now. If you had a half-crown upon you"——

"I have much more than a half-crown upon me, and you shall have it if you will give me an acknowledgment," I returned.

"I'll give you," said Mr. Wylde, gracefully, my solemn I O U on any sum above a sovereign. A gentleman's I O U, I presume, is as sacred as his bond."

"Exactly so. But I must have a receipt in full."

"You may have, Mr. Dunning, my acceptance, if you like, at three, six, or nine months, presupposing that the sum is at least a fiver."

The magnificent air of probity with which he delivered his conditions tickled me.

"Supposing I could accommodate you with ten fivers," I answered, "would you antedate the receipt?"

"I would do anything, sir, honorable and accommodating. I would give you a mortgage on my personal or freehold property, or a lien on my next half-year's salary; whichever you like. But what do you mean?"

Before replying, I called for some refreshment, and helped him copiously yet judiciously. "Look here, Wylde," I said, "I have reason in this, of course—a motive. I want to prove to certain parties, who shall be nameless, that my income a couple of years ago amounted to a certain sum—call it x in algebra; an unknown quantity. Now if I get a receipt from you for an advance, dating about eighteen months back, I have documentary evidence which I can exhibit, and prove my position at that time. Do you see?"

"I see," chuckled Wylde. "Like the arrears of unpaid income-tax, only more valuable, being a gentleman's bona fide receipt. Sly dog!"

"The money you shall have down—now. Will you give me an antedated receipt?"

"What's the sum?"

"Five hundred pounds."

Mr. Wylde upset his glass. "Bring forth the bond," he cried heroically. "I'll sign it if it were dated five hundred years back."

I produced the receipt, previously prepared on one of the firm's loose forms, and the bank-note Number 7,482. The latter Mr. Wylde eyed suspiciously, questioning its genuineness. But upon my showing him that the receipt was merely for his note, with the number specified, and that unless the note were good the acknowledgment would be valueless, he abated his distrust, merely remarking that he should never believe his luck until he had "cashed the flimsy."

But he affixed his signature without further protest. And on my expressing a desire to have the names of a couple of witnesses to the document, Mr. Wylde, relieved at the demand as corroborative of the genuineness of the note, summoned the landlord and waiter, who added their names with cheerful alacrity, pleased at being called upon to witness so tremendous a transaction.

"And now," said Mr. Wylde, when it was concluded, "I shall quit an ungrateful country, and seek to plant the standard of art in the far west. When I have acquired the colossal fortune which awaits the true artist in that more enterprising clime, I shall punctually discharge this debt, Mr. Dunning, which I persist in regarding as a mere temporary obligation."

CHAPTER IV.

THE possession of the true receipt was an important step gained; the next and difficult one was to obtain and destroy the forged acknowledgment. Towards that attainment I now directed my energies.

I knew it could be concealed in no draw or desk accessible to the firm; it was too valuable to be allowed to slip out of Murden's private keeping. It was likely enough kept under lock and key in his own desk. Watching my opportunity, I abstracted his bunch of keys one day when he was engaged in the private room of the firm, having left them in one of his drawers. There was no time to rummage in his desk, but I rapidly took an impression of all his keys—only five in number—in wax, which I kept prepared for that purpose. The mould I took to a locksmith, the son of my landlady, a man on whom I could rely. Trumping up some story about a fellow-clerk whose honesty I suspected, and whose drawers I wished to search, I got him to make me a set of keys according to the pattern. The locksmith was not a man burdened with conscientious scruples; besides, he knew me well enough not to discredit my motives in ordering the job. He made the keys readily and deftly. Armed with these, one evening, when the clerks were gone, I opened the cashier's desk, and subjected its contents to a thorough examination.

Not a paper, not a memorandum could I find having reference to the Wilde business; not a document relating to Number 7,482. There were only two out of the five keys which fitted locks in the office—one the desk, another a private drawer. The others apparently belonged to drawers or chests at Murden's private residence; and there, in all probability, the receipt lay.

The next day I sent an excuse for non-attendance at the office, pleading illness, and set about elaborately counterfeiting the handwriting of Murden, authorizing his landlady to allow me to visit his rooms for the purpose of finding a deed which he had left at home. This forged letter procured me a ready admission into his rooms, the landlady contenting herself with suffering me to go up-stairs unaccompanied. The coast was clear, for Murden was down to the office, and I had all the morning and afternoon before me. I left no corner or crevice unexplored. I ransacked his clothes,

books and papers. All to no purpose. My search brought to light other keys, which sufficed to open every closed receptacle in the place. But not a vestige of the receipt or clew to its hiding-place could be found. After a long and fruitless search, I turned away with a heavy heart, convinced that if he still held the receipt, it must be carried about his person.

Disappointed and dejected, I turned my steps towards Kennington, hoping to gain strength of heart and acuteness of invention from a sight of the beloved face. For Kate's gentle and reliant nature ever stimulated and fortified me—taught me endurance, taught me to hope against hope. I found her alone. Though she read in my countenance that I had no good news to bring as yet, her patient, uncomplaining voice nerved me as of old, and I regained confidence. After all, fortune had befriended us generously; for much was already done towards clearing her father's name. I did not despair of accomplishing all in time. There was the rub. Would time be accorded us?

As if in answer to the inquiry, her father's knock was heard, and Kate, looking out of the window, saw that he was accompanied by Murden. Her terror rose.

"Oh, go—go!" she cried, excitedly; "there will be a scene if he meets you here again. He is so violent, and then he has my father in his power, and father's health is so shattered. Not for your own sake, but for mine, do pray avoid him."

Unable to resist her entreaty, I slipped into an adjoining room, and as they ascended the stairs and entered the sitting-room, I passed down. Murden's overcoat was hanging in the hall. He had taken it off preparatory to passing the evening there.

There was a last hope that I might find the receipt in one of the pockets. Quick as thought, I passed my hand into the pocket in the breast of the coat, and found a bulky pocket-book. It was full of old letters. But there was an inner receptacle.

Victory! The receipt, with Wylde's counterfeited signature in a shaky, ill-disguised hand! A poor, blundering attempt at forgery. I stifled the cry of triumph which rose to my lips, pocketed the forged receipt, substituted the veritable one, and returned the pocket-book to the coat. Then I calmly remounted the stairs, and entered Graham's sitting-room.

Murden was lolling on the sofa as I entered, and looked up with his supercilious, insolent stare. "Halloo, Mister Skulk," he began, "I thought you were ill in bed; but it seems you're not too ill to poke your nose into places where you are not wanted."

Not noticing him directly, I turned to Kate with a look which she understood—a look which caused her face to brighten. Taking her hand as if to say good-evening, I whispered, "Your father is safe; back me up." She smiled, and I turned to the old man.

"Mr. Graham," I asked, "why do you suffer this underbred person about your house?"

The old clerk started, flushed, and began to stammer.

"He is a compound of insolence and falsehood; a tyrant without the power which he affects, and no companion for you or your daughter."

He started from the sofa with an oath. "If you approach me," I cried, stopping him, "I'll knock you down."

I knew him then for a coward, for he stopped short in the blow which he had meditated. He was a bigger and older man than I, but he held back and ground his teeth.

"You don't know what you are doing, you braggart," he at length muttered, livid with rage. "You are ruining your precious friends here."

"You lie," I retorted; "there is nothing you can do which can harm a hair of their heads."

"Isn't there?" he cried. "I can send this old man to penal servitude; I can beggar his daughter; and I will."

"An empty threat—a bragging boast, as mendacious as all you ever say."

He shook a trembling finger at the old man, whose state of terror I cannot hope to describe. "He is a forger," hissed Murden. "A thief and forger."

"What has he forged? Why do you waste words? Where are your proofs?"

"I'll show you what he has forged, if that's any satisfaction, my young champion; and the proofs shall be laid to-morrow before other eyes than yours." And he strode vindictively out of the room.

In a moment he returned with his pocket-book. I was holding the hand of Kate, who stood calm and confident by my side. The old man sunk into a chair, and was wringing his hands. "There," cried Murden, open-

ing the book with a trembling hand, "if you must know your friend's handiwork, look at it, but keep your fingers off."

"Look at it yourself before you boast," I answered. "Are the names of the witnesses forged, too?"

In an instant his face fell as he glanced at the receipt. He knew that he was discomfited. The paper shook in his grasp and with a bitter curse he would have flung it into the fire; but I had seized him and wrenched the receipt from his clutch.

"Drop that," I remarked. "No felony. That receipt is not yours, but Bustler & Clark's, and to-morrow I restore it to their keeping, and advise them to take care of it."

He turned to the door with a cry of baffled rage.

"To-morrow," he shrieked, "I will have you kicked out of the office." And shaking his clenched fist he departed.

But he did not keep his word. A fortnight afterwards he himself left, suddenly and on compulsion. It was rumored that the firm had detected him in a course of defalcation. This is what the clerks whispered, but Bustler & Clark said nothing.

Six months afterwards Kate and I were married. Some weeks previously I had proposed to leave Bustler & Clark also, for I had no further need of employment. The de-

cease of a relative, some time since dead in Australia, had left old Graham a comfortable annuity, and Kate even better endowed. She laid her fortune at my feet, and besought me to take it with herself. But Bustler & Clark would not hear of my going, and I ultimately purchased an interest in the firm, which is now known as Bustler, Clark & Dunning.

Whether Murden had obtained an inkling of the fortune in store for Kate—it had for some time gone begging until the legatees were traced—I never learned. At all events we heard no more of him, and believed he had left England.

When our honeymoon was over, I one day questioned old Graham as to the piece of paper he had actually destroyed under the belief that it was the bank-note. He answered that he had never parted with the remnant, and I could see it if I chose. When he brought it, I examined it closely. Only a charred corner remained.

"Why, this," I exclaimed, "is no Bank of England note; there is no watermark—and see, what letters are those?"

A light broke upon me. It was the residue of one of those confounded Bank of Elegance notes which Tom had been so fond of buying, and in its destruction it had fatally resembled Number 7,482.

BARBARA'S SECRET.

BY MRS. E. V. WILSON.

IT was at the close of a beautiful autumn day, sixty years ago, that the landlord of the little tavern—which bore the sign of a sheaf of golden wheat on a purple background—in the small village of R—, in Ohio, stood in his doorway looking up the hill, over which the main street of the village climbed; or perhaps I should say, over which the State road ran, for said State road constituted the main street, on either side of which were built the principal business houses, as well as the best residences of the place.

Suddenly, just as the sun was sinking behind this hill, with a rattle and a rumble, a cracking of a long-lashed whip, and a shrill blast from the mail horn, the great, lumbering stage-coach, with its four dappled grays, appeared on its summit. But only for a

second was it outlined there against the amber and blue of the western sky, for it dashed down the long slope, and was drawn up in front of the tavern, almost before the little throng of loafers congregated at the corner grocery opposite had time to "wonder if the stage had many passengers to-day."

As the driver flung his long lines down with a flourish, and prepared to descend from his lofty seat, the landlord hastened to open the door of the vehicle, and lowered with a great show of import the carpeted steps, while the driver, going around to the back, took from the ponderous boot the small mail bag and carried it across the street to the grocery, which was also the village post-office.

Meanwhile the one passenger had, with

the help of the landlord, gained the sidewalk in front of the tavern, and now stood waiting while the host gathered up her few belongings, a carpet-bag and an umbrella comprising the whole.

"Walk in, miss, walk in," said the host, preceding her. "It's a little coolish, and you'll find a fire in the settin'-room. Had a lonesome ride, I guess; come far alone? Got friends in R——, or going further?"

No answer being made to his remarks, the good-natured host, on reaching the sitting-room, turned and surveyed the passenger critically.

He saw before him a tall, slender girl, apparently about twenty years old. Her eyes were large and blue in color, her hair, black and glossy, was parted smoothly over a broad, high forehead, and falling partly over the small ears, was gathered in a knot low on the back of her head. But what principally attracted his notice was the peculiar pallor of her face; there was not a vestige of color on cheeks or brow; even the beautifully curved lips were pale, and as he looked, were pressed firmly together, as if in pain.

"You are sick," he exclaimed, as he noticed this. "Sit right down. I'll call Miss Allan."

"No, no," interrupted the girl, speaking for the first time; "I am not sick—only tired. I have traveled a long ways. Could you let me have a private room?"

Her voice was musical and low, but trembled, and her lips quivered, and her large eyes fixed upon his face with a frightened gaze that, as the landlord afterward said, "frustrated a fellow in spite of himself."

The one private room up-stairs was quickly placed at the young lady's disposal; and when she had entered it and closed the door, declining the offer to have a cup of tea sent up—saying she only wanted to rest, and could not eat—the landlord, filled with curiosity, hurried to the stable, whither he knew the stage-driver had followed the hostler to superintend the care of his horses.

"Jim," he exclaimed, the moment he caught sight of that worthy watching the hostler's proceedings with a critical eye, "who is that young lady, and where is she going?"

"Well," said the driver, "I've heard say any fool can ask questions—not meaning you're a fool, Mr. Allan—that a wise man can't answer—not meaning that I'm a wise

man, either. But as for that young lady, I don't know who she is, nor where she's going."

"You know where you picked her up, don't you?" asked the landlord.

"Yes, that I do know. She got out of the O—— stage at O—— last night. Bob Setters said he picked her up the morning before at T——. Seemed she'd traveled a good ways then. Well, she asked where the next stage stopped; told her at R——. She said she would go on, so of course she got in my coach, with several other passengers. Rest all got out afore we got here. Don't believe she spoke to one of 'em—jest set like a statue. Mighty purty one."

The driver paused, out of breath.

"Well, it seems mighty queer," said the landlord, "for a young thing like that to be going round this way. Guess I'll get Miss Allan to see about it"; and he betook himself back to the house.

Upon hearing his story, the aforesaid "Miss Allan," his wife, ascended to her guest's room, carrying a cup of tea by way of excuse. As there was no fastening to the door, she had no difficulty in obtaining an entrance. Once inside the room, however, she paused in some embarrassment before the large, questioning eyes turned towards her. The girl, or young woman, was seated near the window, her folded hands resting in her lap, her bonnet—a neat, silken one of the then prevailing shape called a calashe, looking more like a carriage-top than anything else I can think of—and her shawl, a fine, black cashmere, had been removed, and lay upon the bed; her gown, of dark brown merino, fell in soft folds about her, and her ungloved hands, as the landlady afterwards said, looked like snowflakes. She never moved or noticed the entrance of the landlady except by her questioning eyes, and after a moment that worthy, having, as she said, "nothing to be ashamed of," stepped forward, saying: "Miss, the driver said you had eaten nothing since morning, so I have brought you a cup of tea and a biscuit. I thought maybe you was sick."

"I am not sick," replied the girl, "only tired. If you will put the things on the stand, I will try to eat a little. You are very kind."

The landlady slowly placed the japanned waiter on the table, and then made another effort at conversation.

"I suppose you have come a good ways," she said. "Are you going on in the morning?"

"I would like to be alone now, if you please," said the stranger, quietly.

The astonished landlady flounced out of the room indignantly. "Never," she said to her husband, who was tending the baby during her absence, "never had she seen such an impudent creature; ordering me out of the room, indeed!"

But next morning, when the young lady came down-stairs to a late breakfast, she was treated with marked consideration. Curiosity had quite overcome every other feeling in the good Mrs. Allan's breast, and as she poured her guest's coffee she smiled benignly. As for the guest herself, she sat pale and silent through the meal, eating mechanically what was placed before her; but when the other guests, having finished their repasts, left the room, she looked up at Mrs. Allan and said, "My name is Barbara Black. I am entirely alone in the world, and dependent on my own labor for a living. I like the looks of this little town, and wish to stay here, if I can get anything to do. Can you help me to employment?"

"Dear me," exclaimed Mrs. Allan; "so you're an orphan? How long has your parents been dead? and ain't you got any relations to help you? 'Pears like you're young to be running round alone."

She paused; but as there was no answer from the pale girl before her, she went on:—

"What sort of work can you do? Most everybody here does their own housework; and there's Miss Johnson, the dress-maker"—

Her listener interrupted her. "I can do any work a woman should do," she said, "from teaching school to spinning wool."

"Well, I declare," said the landlady, "if that's so, you ought to find something to git at. See here, Jim," to the hostler, who was lounging in the bar-room, which opened into the dining-room, "has old Miss Robinson got anybody to do up her wool yet?"

Jim slouched into the room without removing his hat. "I dunno," he said, staring at Barbara. "Why, does the young woman want to get work?"

Barbara rose from her chair. "If you will let me wear your sunbonnet," she said, addressing Mrs. Allan, "and show me where Mrs. Robinson lives, I will go and see her."

Mrs. Allan readily complied with both requests, bringing her best sunbonnet, and pointing out from her doorway the home of the Robinsons.

Barbara came back in an hour. She had been successful in getting work, and with many thanks to Mrs. Allan she returned the sunbonnet, paid her bill, and taking her carpet-bag and umbrella left the house.

"Well," said Mrs. Allan to her husband, "of all close-mouthed women ever I seed, she's the closest. Must be something wrong about her; yet still she has an innercent look. What do you think of her, anyhow?"

"I think she's right handsome," replied the landlord. "Don't you be oneasy; old Miss Robinson'll find out all about her, I guess; shouldn't wonder if the old lady jest took her in to find her out, 'cause the stage-driver was talkin' about her last night while old man Robinson was settin' in the bar-room."

But if such were old Mrs. Robinson's intention, it was never carried out. Barbara remained with her several weeks, doing her work in the most satisfactory manner. Then she found employment elsewhere. Wherever she went she made friends, doing her work, whatever it chanced to be, thoroughly and well, quiet and unobtrusive in her manner, accepting as a compensation the merest pittance, frequently, indeed, helping some poor overworked mother for a month at a time merely for her board, yet all the while maintaining perfect silence respecting herself.

Months passed. The color came back to Barbara's lips, and occasionally a little crimson, faint as the tints on the petals of the blush rose, was seen in her cheeks. Sometimes, but very rarely, a smile curled about her dainty mouth; but in general a look of patient, uncomplaining sadness rested on her face. To the villagers she was still a mystery. Admitted into their homes and confidences,—for she had proved herself worthy of confidence by being as silent regarding others as herself—she went and came unquestioned. Wherever sickness or trouble were found, you met Barbara. The village physicians summoned her in every critical case, for they soon discovered her skill as a nurse. The minister, noticing her at church, where she was a regular attendant, made her acquaintance, and finding her remarkably well-read and intelligent, invited her to his home, where she became a

frequent and welcome visitor; and she eagerly availed herself of his permission to read anything in his small library. Reading seemed her only pleasure. Every book, and especially every newspaper, that fell in her way were devoured.

The young people would gladly have adopted her into their circle, for she won all hearts by her unassuming kindness; but she declined all invitations to parties, picnics, quilting-bees and apple-parings. More than one young man, attracted by her beautiful face and winning ways, sought to win her regard, only to find himself quietly but effectually repulsed.

And so the years went by, bringing change everywhere, except, it seemed, to Barbara. She steadfastly kept on in the even tenor of her way. Only once were the inner depths stirred. One year, when she had certainly passed her twenty-fifth birthday, to the church she attended there came, as pastor, a young man of more than ordinary ability. He was at once captivated by the grace and beauty of the fair woman, whose strange story was related to him soon after his arrival in R—. And as he was remarkably attractive in manner, being handsome, intelligent, and refined, Barbara showed him more tolerance than she had ever exhibited to any of her rustic admirers. As soon, however, as his attentions drew the notice of her friends, she began to show a disinclination for his society, and it was only by marked persistence that he was able to meet her at all; as for private conversation with her, he was forced to be content with the few words he could coax from her unwilling lips when he occasionally joined her on the street.

But he was one of those men who delight in overcoming obstacles, and the more difficult it became for him to obtain Barbara's society, the more determined he was in the pursuit of it. Of course such a state of affairs could not last, and one evening the end came. The young minister called at the house of Dr. Howard, with whose family Barbara had made her home for some time, and asked for a private interview. At first Barbara demurred, but on Mrs. Howard's representing to her that she at least owed Mr. Seaford the privilege of speaking to her, she reluctantly entered the parlor where he sat. What passed at that interview was never known. It lasted nearly two hours, and at its close the young man left the

house without exchanging a word with any other person. Mrs. Howard, watching from her window as he passed it on his way to the street, saw that he was very pale, and seemed striving to regain his self-control as he paused a moment at the gate and drew himself together, like a man trying to recover from a sudden shock. It was remarked, however, that he afterwards—although he discontinued his particular attention to Barbara—treated her always with marked respect, and spoke of her as one who ranked very high in his esteem.

As for Barbara, she, as usual, was silent; but again that deathly pallor spread over lips and cheek, as she went steadily about her daily duties, and her reserve deepened so much that never again did a suitor seek her side; and so the years went on.

The old people, who had wondered at her coming, one by one were laid in the village burying-ground. The middle-aged, who had borne with her the heat and burden of the day, were growing old. The young men and maidens, who had striven to win her from her solitary life, were sober, married folks; and Barbara, the silver threads shining in her dark hair, silent as ever about herself, went about among them, ever present at the weddings, the births, the deaths, rejoicing quietly in their joys, and sorrowing with them in their sorrows.

She had never received much compensation for her labor; she had seemed to care for only the plainest of raiment, and though a permanent home had more than once been offered her, she had always declined it, saying she must be free to go and come as she pleased.

Now that old age was approaching, her friends sometimes wondered, "what will Barbara do when she is too old to work?" But Barbara was not troubled; and God was good to her—she never became old and helpless. In the strength of middle age, when she had been in R— thirty years, she was stricken down, and after a brief illness, during which every care was given her, she was borne to the church-yard and laid to rest with the other village dead. Her secret, whatever it was, was buried with her. Perhaps it was no greater than many a weary, heart-sick woman bears every day; for women keep the sorrowful secrets of the world in their hearts, and the silence of the grave, when it comes, is often only a little deeper than the silence of their lives.

Poor Barbara Black! She had never allowed herself to be called anything but Barbara, and when some of the little ones she cradled on her knees essayed to soften its harshness by saying "auntie," she had gently refused the endearing appellation. Barbara was all she had a right to, she said.

Her few personal belongings she requested, as she lay dying, might be given to a poor widow of the village, and any money left, out of the small sum she had hoarded for funeral expenses, was to be disposed of in the same manner.

Looking over these belongings with some curiosity, the women who had attended her last found among them a small, leather-bound Episcopal prayer-book, which opened as it was taken up at the fifty-fifth psalm, showing how often it had been opened at that place, while a scrap of paper, yellow with age, fell to the floor. They picked it up and tried to decipher the faded writing,

but could only succeed in reading a sentence here and there. It was evidently a portion of a letter, and was written in an elegant masculine hand. "O Barbara," one sentence read, "is there no hope of pardon?" Another read: "Loving you as I love my life, ah, more than my life, as my soul, and yet you doubt!" Then: "O my God! how cruel you are, Barbara! I meant no wrong. How can I help her loving me? I will not give you up!" Here the paper had been torn across. There was neither signature nor address, and that torn scrap of paper was all the clew ever given to Barbara's secret; for the little prayer-book had not even its place or date of publication, the leaves having been torn out until the "Order for Morning-Prayer" was reached.

Barbara's memory still lingers among the hills where so much of her life was passed, and her grave, green with the sods of years, can still be seen in the church-yard of R—.

IN SCHOOL-DAYS.

BY LUELLA VAN GRAFT.

THE sunlight-fell in golden rays across the school-room floor;

The morn was fair and beautiful, as oft in days before.

A charmed spot this room to me, for here, day after day,
My Roger came, and smiled to me, and stole my heart away.

I tried to learn my lessons—impossible to do!

For ever 'twixt my books and me came laughing eyes of blue;

A wealth of light-brown hair, and a face as frank as day;

O Roger, Roger, smiling there, you stole my heart away!

I tried to learn astronomy, but "Jupiter" and "Venus"

Could not compare with his bright smiles, and brought no love between us.

Geology I thrust aside; instead of rock and stone,

I dreamed of pleasant summer woods, where we two walked alone.

With French the same old story; I caught myself all day

Dwelling with girlish fondness over the verb "aimer."

And dreaded trigonometry, with "cosine" and with "sine,"

Were slighted without pity, to bow at love's fair shrine.

O Roger, Roger! whence the spell, that in those days of old,

You wove around my girlish heart with webs of magic gold?

Each loving word, each witching smile, that gave such heaven to me,

Is shrined within my heart of hearts—a life-long memory.

Oh! life was sweet, and life was fair, and love was in its prime;

Our happy hearts went singing on, like birds at matin time.

And many fairy hopes we built; alas! some have their knelling,

And buds have blasted on the vine, that blithely then were swelling;

And many years have come and gone since that sad parting time,

But memory dwells with loving tears on days of "auld lang syne";

And in my heart sweet, tender thoughts reign all supreme for thee;

God's sunshine rest upon thee! God keep thee tenderly!

THE WRECK OF THE ATLAS.*

A TALE OF THE SEASIDE.

BY RAY THOMPSON.

CHAPTER IX.

ON his return to the city, Artell lost no time in converting Haldane's scanty effects into cash. This done, he engaged state-rooms in the *Asia*, and chartered a fast-sailing yacht for the trip to Broad Beach. All things being in readiness, he notified his partner in iniquity, and set sail for the rendezvous.

"Sharp work," muttered Haldane as he finished reading Artell's communication. "It is less than three days since the rascal left me, and he writes that he will be at Broad Beach with the boat, this afternoon before sunset. I'll drive down alone and make sure that he is there. Then I'll return for the heiress. In the meantime, I'll inform her that I intend to take her to her lover this evening. If fortune favors my plan, I'll have her on board the steamer early in the morning, and as the *Asia* sails before noon, we shall soon be on our way to London."

Haldane's arrival found the little craft anchored in the open roadstead at Broad Beach. He waved his handkerchief, and a boat, rowed by the skipper, put off for him with all speed.

Artell, who was at the tiller, jumped on shore the instant the boat's keel touched the sand.

"Where's the girl?" was his first question.

"She's at Netherby," said Haldane. "I wanted to be sure of your safe arrival before bringing her to Broad Beach."

"Well, we're here as you see; and you'd best get the girl along at once. The *Asia* sails at ten o'clock to-morrow morning, and unless we take advantage of the present fair wind we shall lose our passage.

"I'll return for the heiress in good time, but first I must go on board your craft and examine the accommodations."

Both Artell and the skipper protested against what they considered unnecessary delay. Their objections, however, were

overruled by Haldane, and a moment later they were alongside the craft.

The skipper shipped his oars, and, snatching up a boat-hook, caught the vessel's rigging in order to stop the boat which was rapidly drifting astern.

Checked in its career, the light boat swung round so suddenly as to half fill with water. As Haldane and Artell sprang to their feet in an attempt to balance the craft, their united action capsized it, and sent them floundering in the water.

"Hang to her bottom!" shouted the skipper, as with the boat's painter in his teeth, he climbed on board the yacht by means of the boat-hook.

His advice was followed by Artell, who, after much struggling, managed to secure a position on the overturned boat.

Haldane, less fortunate than his companion, uttered a bubbling cry and sank rapidly beneath the green waves.

The skipper was a man of action. Fastening the boat's painter with a few turns of his wrist, he plunged into the sea, grasped the sinking man, and, reappearing on the surface, lifted and pushed his unconscious burden upon the boat.

"This 'ere's a queer start," he exclaimed, as, seizing hold of the boat, he drew his huge body half its length out of the water.

Artell, pale and trembling, could only point to the supine form of Haldane.

"We must get him on board and revive him," saying which, the skipper again clambered up the side of the yacht. "Slip this under his arms," he ordered in another moment, as he lowered a line to Artell. The latter adjusted the running bowline as directed, and then assisted the skipper in hoisting the half drowned man on board.

Stretched on a locker in the cuddy, Haldane was dosed with raw spirits, while his cold hands were chafed, and his stiffened limbs rubbed unceasingly by the frightened Artell and the energetic skipper. These prompt measures had the desired effect. In a few moments Haldane opened his eyes

and uttered a faint moan. Encouraged by these signs of returning life, the workers redoubled their efforts, and soon were rewarded by seeing their friend slowly regain consciousness.

"Was I near drowning?" came the first faint inquiry from Haldane.

"As near it at a man can be that's born to be hung," said the skipper, as he pressed a brandy bottle to the questioner's lips.

"And the girl—is she with us?" asked Haldane, stimulated by the draught.

"No, she isn't; an' that ain't the worst of it; we're losin' more time by this delay than we can afford," said the skipper; complainingly.

"This intelligence seemed to electrify Haldane. "I must bring her at once," he said; and made an effort to rise. The exertion proved too much for his strength, and he fell back exhausted.

"'Twill be hours afore he's fit to stan' on his feet; was the shipper's hopeful prediction.

"Then we must give up the job," said Artell in dismay.

"There's no need of that," said Haldane, faintly. His breathing was labored, and he spoke without opening his eyes; but he had heard the unwelcome decision, and his unconquerable spirit rebelled against it. "I've left a horse and carriage at the nearest farmhouse," he said, "Take the team, Artell, and go after our prize. I had arranged to meet the girl this evening at old Wilburt's garden gate. You will have to be there in my stead. Tell her I was unable to come, but have sent you to take her to her lover. Stay, I will send a note. It will lull her suspicions; give me a bit of paper and a pencil."

Bewildered by this unexpected turn of affairs, Artell tore a leaf out of his memorandum book, and passed it to Haldane.

"Lift me up," requested the latter, as he seized the paper.

Haldane was raised in the skipper's brawny arms, a pencil was fixed in his cramped fingers, and with considerable difficulty the determined scoundrel managed to indite the following lines:—

DEAR FRIEND,—An unfortunate accident detains me at Broad Beach. Your lover being obliged to remain with me, we have decided to send a trusty messenger after you.

Ask no questions, but come with him as unhesitatingly as you would with

Your humble servant, A. H.

"There," said the writer as he scrawled his initials with a trembling hand, "that ought to bring the girl without fuss or bother."

"I don't know where she lives," protested Artell.

"You can easily find out by inquiring," said Haldane.

"But will she come with me—an entire stranger?"

"She *must* come!" cried Haldane, vehemently. Then he added with increased impatience: "For heaven's sake waste no time in argument, every moment is precious."

"That's true enough," was the skipper's approving exclamation. Then, addressing Artell, he added: "I'll right the boat an' bale her out. After that, I'll pull you ashore; for the sooner you do your errand, the sooner we shall see the worst of a bad job."

The skipper hurried on deck, leaving Artell alone with his partner. A brief conversation served to so encourage the timid messenger that when the boat was in readiness he departed on his mission with considerable confidence.

After landing Artell, the skipper returned to the yacht where his employer required his attention.

"Has Artell gone for the team?" was Haldane's eager query when the skipper re-entered the cuddy.

"The last I saw of him he was making tracks for the farm-house," was the encouraging reply.

"That's good," said the questioner with a sigh of relief.

"'Twould be better if he was back here with the girl," rejoined the skipper. "We don't want to lose this breeze, though, if I'm any judge of weather, we're likely to have all the wind we want afore mornin'. There's a nor'-wester brewin', but there's no tellin' when 'twill break loose."

"If a nor'-wester is a fair wind for us, the sooner it comes, the better," said Haldane.

"It won't be a fair wind, and the chances are it will come afore we're ready for it," muttered the skipper. He said nothing to Haldane, however, and the conversation soon took a different turn.

CHAPTER X.

THERE was no disguising the fact that Marcia was getting to be strangely discontented. Everybody in the Wilburt cottage noticed her changed demeanor, and many guesses were hazarded as to the cause of her uneasiness.

Miss Dorkey, who was accustomed to pride herself on her penetration, attributed Marcia's disquietude to a change of diet. "I knew from the first that the poor child would be unable to stand the food which your husband persists in forcing upon her," the spinster observed to Mrs. Wilburt, as the two were confidentially discussing the matter.

Although Mrs. Wilburt made no reply at the time, she afterward repeated the remark to the captain, and asked him if he thought there was any truth in it.

"Lord, no," retorted the mariner, impatiently. "As for victuals, the girl doesn't eat enough of any sort to affect her one way or another; and if she did, that Donkey woman wouldn't know anything about it. But there's something worrying the child, for all that. She reminds me of a craft that's shifted cargo. Whereas she was once in fair sailing trim, and making good weather, she is now masterly by the head, and is falling to leeward like a Jersey schooner that's lost her centre-board. It seems to have all happened in a smooth sea, too; that's what puzzles me," he added reflectively.

It was evening when the foregoing conversation occurred in the little sitting-room where the worthy couple sat alone. The philosophical captain would doubtless have pursued the subject farther, but at this point he was interrupted by the object of his solicitude, who, accompanied by her aunt, entered the room.

Captain Jack noticed that his charge was looking unusually dull and low-spirited. By way of diverting her, he lifted the family Bible from the table, remarking:—

"Now, Miss Marcia, I will open to a chapter at random, and I want you to read it to me. That's the way old Parson McCleod used to do when he was in dead earnest. The parson was a Scotchman, sent out by an English missionary society to preach the gospel to a gang of mahogany choppers at Honduras. He'd get up in the pulpit, shut his eyes, and open the Bible.

The first verse he happened to clap his finger on was made to answer for a text. With no other preparation than that, I've heard him preach a sermon that would scare a sinner into fits, and keep an honest man uneasy for a week afterwards."

While speaking, the captain opened the volume, and handed it to Marcia.

The random selection proved to be the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew.

Drawing a chair up to the table, Marcia seated herself, and began her task. She had frequently read portions of Scripture to the captain, and the occupation had proved mutually agreeable. On the present occasion, however, her listener seemed to be alone in his enjoyment. When the reader came to the passage describing the storm on Gallilee, and the fright of the disciples, the mariner could contain himself no longer, but broke out in his rumbling bass:—

"Aye, the lubbers! I daresay their craft was wallowing in the trough of the sea, with her sails slatting, and her booms jerking like the pump brake on board a Novia Scotiaman; and all for want of a little seaman-ship. But matters were fixed shipshape as soon as the Master came aboard; and it's always just that way with us all. Unless we're lucky enough to get the wind dead aft, we make no effort to lay our course, but go drifting about life's ocean until the Master takes us in hand, and puts us on the right tack. Ain't that apt to be the case, Miss Donkey?"

"Your views may be correct, but you'll excuse me for saying that my ignorance of ships forbids my understanding your nautical similes," said Miss Dorkey, and, tossing her head contemptuously, she rose abruptly and left the room.

"I don't know what she means by naughty sim-er-lees," said the captain addressing Marcia. "I can't be expected to understand all the outlandish gibberish that runs off a frivolous woman's tongue, but I do know that whenever I try to draw your aunt into conversation I am sure to be brought up with a round turn. She's like the brig Bengal, a clumsy little hooker that I made my first voyage to Liverpool in. The old tub had been ashore so many times that she was warped all out of shape—hogged, a sailor would call it. With the fairest wind that ever blew she'd sail ten ways at once, and keeping her on her course was like trying to make a crab walk straight.

Whenever I see your aunt bracing up and sidling off out of earshot, I'm reminded of that old brig. The poor woman must have spent half her life in running against rocks, to have got such a terrible twist in her disposition. There's a deal of thought in that reflection, Miss Marcia, as you can ascertain by finding out."

In the meantime, the subject of Captain Jack's remarks had strolled out into the garden, and was wandering aimlessly about under the trees. The sun went down behind a bank of purple clouds, and the damp evening breeze blew fitfully across the hills; yet the lady continued her solitary ramble. After a time a light appeared in the cottage window, and by its cheerful glow Mrs. Wilburt was seen dropping the curtain. The circumstance was noticed by Miss Dorkey, and it reminded her of the lateness of the hour. Being near the gate, in the farthest corner of the enclosure, she was on the point of starting for the house when a man's head popped up suddenly above the fence, and its owner stretched forth a hand in which a bit of folded paper was barely discernible.

"Mercy on us!" ejaculated Miss Dorkey, skipping briskly away from the intruder.

"Hush," whispered the stranger, laying a warning finger against his lips.

"Who are you, and what do you want?" asked the lady, with a faint show of courage.

"My name is Artell, and I've a note for you," was the prompt reply.

"For me?"

"For you."

"Who wrote it?"

"Your best friend."

At this intelligence a faint blush, indistinguishable in the gathering twilight, mantled the spinster's cheek, like sunshine illuminating an old ruin. Feeling convinced that the all-important event of her life was about to happen, she saw fit to assume an air of ferocious coquetry. "Did you write the letter?" she asked, scanning Artell closely.

"I wouldn't be guilty of such a thing," was his honest reply.

"And yet you are bold enough and bad enough to bring it to me and thrust it upon me."

"That's another matter," was the prompt rejoinder. "I was asked to deliver the message by one who is my friend as well as your own. As for thrusting it on you, if

you get the note you'll have to reach for it; and if you want it you'd best do so at once, as I've no time to lose."

"You mysterious creature," said Miss Dorkey, advancing cautiously. "Were I to take the note, my imprudence would be the town's talk to-morrow. How can I rely on the discretion of a stranger!"

As she spoke she took the note from the messenger and, holding it within an inch of her nose, began studying its contents.

"For the land's sake!" she murmured, when she had read the missive.

"Exactly," said Artell, sympathetically.

"The note," said Miss Dorkey, waving the bit of paper spasmodically, "is signed with the initials A. H.; I suppose you know to whom they belong."

"As well as you do yourself, madam," said Artell, who, wearying of the protracted interview, was resolved to end it without loss of time. "The message," he continued, "comes from Mr. Haldane, and is, of course, perfectly intelligible to you. I have driven a matter of four miles to deliver it, and to take you to your friends at Broad Beach. My team waits in the road just below here, and I must trouble you to walk to it if you intend to return with me."

This intelligence, delivered in a hurried whisper, caused Miss Dorkey to fairly gape with astonishment. Although she knew not who was waiting for her at Broad Beach, nor why Haldane should have undertaken to inform her of the circumstance, she perceived at once that the adventure bade fair to be a most extraordinary one. Without suspecting that the bearer of the note could have possibly mistaken her identity, she rushed to the conclusion that the affair had been planned solely with a view to her abduction; and with a love of romance which frequently characterizes weak natures, she prepared to show herself a heroine worthy of the situation.

"You wicked man!" she said, approaching the gate and looking Artell steadily in the eye; "I will never stir with you one inch beyond these grounds, never!"

There was that in the speaker's voice and manner which would have reassured a person less courageous and determined than Artell. "Come on," he said, kicking the gate open with his foot and seizing her by the wrist.

Miss Dorkey uttered a stifled sob and sank down helplessly on the graveled walk.

Her hat fell off, but without stopping for ceremony, Artell picked it up and jammed it on her head. This done, he raised her bony form in his puny arms, and half carried, half dragged her to where the carriage stood in a turn of the road. Bundling his burden into the vehicle, he unhitched the horse, sprang up beside her, and in another instant was speeding rapidly away with his prize.

Not a word was spoken by the occupants of the carriage as they rode rapidly over the deserted country road. Beyond an occasional sidelong glance at the half-recumbent form at his side, Artell paid no attention to his companion, but busied himself with plying the whip, and urging his horse to greater speed.

Meanwhile, as the darkness increased, the wind rose rapidly; by the time the carriage reached its destination, it was blowing half a gale. Driving straight across the fields, Artell drew up at the shore, and fastened his horse to a young sapling that grew near the beach. Out of the darkness came a voice which he recognized as belonging to the skipper of the yacht.

"Be lively," said that worthy; "I'm waitin' here with the boat, an' I don't want to fool 'round this blasted beach all night."

"Come," said Artell, reaching into the carriage and seizing Miss Dorkey's hand, "there's no time to lose."

A shriek from the lady, as she made an effort to free herself from his grasp, was the only reply to his invitation.

"What yer waitin' for?" demanded the skipper, with manifest impatience.

"I'll be there directly," responded Artell, as he vainly attempted to draw the lady out of the carriage.

Alarmed by his persistence, Miss Dorkey uttered a piercing cry that caused Artell's hair to stand with fright, while the skipper took occasion to warn him that unless he wanted to wake the neighborhood, he'd better put a stop to that racket.

"Come and help me get this woman out of the carriage," urged Artell, who began to despair of accomplishing the task unaided.

In obedience to this request, the heavy tread of the skipper was heard smashing the shingles on the beach, and the next moment his burly form loomed up beside the carriage.

Encouraged by the presence of an ally,

Artell climbed into the vehicle. As he entered at one side, Miss Dorkey went out at the other, and was instantly seized by the skipper, who exclaimed, as he bore her screaming and kicking to the boat:—

"I have you now, you screech-owl, so let up on your nonsense till we get aboard."

On reaching the boat the skipper deposited Miss Dorkey in the sternsheets, and directed Artell to a seat beside her. This done, he pushed the boat off, and shipping the oars, pulled lustily away from the shore toward a faint light that was twinkling like a star out on the bay.

As the boat came alongside the yacht, Haldane caught the rope that was thrown him by the skipper. "Have you got her?" he asked, vainly endeavoring to distinguish the occupants of the boat by the feeble rays of the lantern that hung above him in the rigging.

"Aye, we've got her, and it's my opinion a noisier critter was never caught on this coast," said the skipper, as he laid in his oars.

As if to bear him out in the statement, Miss Dorkey at that instant gave vent to an ear-splitting scream, which might have been heard for a considerable distance above the noise of the gathering storm.

"Hand the lady up," said Haldane, as he reached with both hands over the little vessel's side. "We'll soon teach her not to cry out in that fashion," he added, in an undertone.

Pulled by Haldane and pushed by the skipper, Miss Dorkey was at last hoisted triumphantly to the deck. As the light from the lantern fell upon her pinched, haggard features, Haldane started back in dismay.

"Great heavens!" he cried, turning to Artell, whose head at that instant appeared above the rail, "who have we here?"

Before Artell could answer, the questioner seized him by the collar, shouting: "You idiot! You've brought off the aunt instead of the heiress! How *could* you mistake this old woman!"—

"Old woman!" interrupted the enraged spinster, with a cry as harsh as the scream of an eagle, "old woman, do you call me? O you wretch! O you contemptible liar and deceiver! You shall swing for this night's work if there's law in the land or gibbet in the state."

"Take the old cat ashore this instant!"

bawled Haldane, hoarse with rage and blind with passion. "Away with you!" he yelled, as he lifted Miss Dorkey over the side by main strength. Dropping her into the boat, he said to the skipper, "If she is quiet, land her on the beach. If she makes any fuss throw her overboard; but whatever you do, come back without her as quickly as possible."

"I ain't goin' ashore ag'in to-night," said the skipper, rising in the boat.

"Go to perdition, then," cried Haldane, as he unfastened the boat's painter.

The tiny craft dropped rapidly astern, and soon after the sound of oars grinding in the rowlocks betokened that its rebellious owner was pulling for the beach.

"Do you know my brother-in-law, Mr. Thornton?" asked Miss Dorkey, as the boat went tossing over the rising waves.

"I've heerd tell of him," replied the skipper, crossly.

"Well," continued the lady, "then you've heard of one who will spare no pains to pay you and your cowardly associates for your villainy."

"I ought to be paid somethin' han'some for my share, seein' as how I've done the heft of the work," growled the skipper.

Nothing further was said until the shore was reached, when the skipper remarked to Miss Dorkey as she stepped out of the boat:—

"Go straight over the hill, an' you'll come to a farm-house; or if you're in a hurry to git home you can take the team an' start."

"Thank you for nothing," was the tart rejoinder.

The skipper paid no attention to her answer, but exerted himself in pushing the boat off the beach. Miss Dorkey listened to the sound of the oars as he pulled away in the darkness. In a few moments she heard the creaking of blocks, followed by the flapping of canvas, from which she concluded that the yacht was getting under way. Knowing that nothing was to be gained by waiting longer on the beach, she turned, and facing the wind, toiled resolutely up the hill in the direction of the nearest farm-house.

[To be continued.]

ORIGIN OF THE SCHOONER.

A. D., 1708.

TRAGABIZANDA headland fair,
Of old North Shore, the region where
Two centuries ago, and more,
Coasted in boat along the shore
Captain John Smith, who, on this land
Of rock and cove and forest grand,
Bestowed the oriental name
In memory of a Turkish dame;
Here at "the harbor" of Cape Ann
Dwelt erst a stalwart, vigorous man,
One justly famed for work well done;
His name was Andrew Robinson.
He builded ships and smaller craft
Of both the "square rig" and "fore-and-aft."
He felled the timber, hewed the beams,
Laid keel and frame, and caulked the seams,
Himself and gang, a canny crew,
All "builded better than they knew."
A curious craft by him designed,
Constructed to his master mind,
Bolted and pinned secure and staunch,
At length was ready for the launch.
Removed the shores, hauled up the ways,

(A custom rife in earlier days)
Secured the bilge with chock and wedge,
The bows supplied with hawse and kedge.
Assembled crowds from far and wide
To be there at the "top of tide,"
In wagon, cart, on horse, on foot,
In shallop, ketch and open float,
Eager to see the great event
Of new style craft to water sent.
The "after block" is knocked away,
Clearing the passage to the bay.
Trembling she moves, she glides, she flies,
A glorious sight to watching eyes;
And as she glides the tallowd shoon
A strange voice cries, "Oh, don't she scoon!"
The tone is loud, distinct and clear,
Rising above the hearty cheer.
When that strange voice the builder heard
His quick mind grasped the curious word;
He cried to all on land and sea:
"Well, then, a schooner let her be!"
Ere long her flag aloft unfurled
Proclaimed the schooner to the world.

OLD TINDER-BOXES.

THOSE who have seen, in old Rome, that beautiful little circular gem of pagan architecture called the Temple of Vesta, will remember with what reverence the sacred fire was guarded there, how that the priestesses who presided over it were appointed for thirty years; and how that if, by any mischance, the fire went out, it could never be relighted except by the rays of the sun itself.

Reader, do you remember the old-fashioned tinder-boxes, from which our fathers and our grandfathers obtained their lights and their fires? If not, you cannot be so old as I am, for I remember them well; for only a little more than half a century has gone since then. The idea of getting light and fire out of a box! Let us recall the value of the sacred fire, and think of the said vestal virgins guarding it so assiduously two thousand years ago, and we need not turn up our noses, even if we have to get fire from a tinder-box. Nowadays, we have come to look upon fire and light as the commonest of common things, the common wealth of the world, and forget the difficulty of producing them in olden days by the attrition of pieces of dry wood—a tedious operation—or by the use of flint and steel. This brings me to the use of the tinder-box when I was a boy, and probably in use in outside places at the present day.

It is somewhat a puzzle to me how Robinson Crusoe first got the light and fire which roasted his kids and by which he read his Bible. Very likely he picked up a strike-a-light in the cabin of the doomed vessel; however, he seems to have lost it again; for after having made many fires and candles for years after the shipwreck, we read that whilst exploring a certain grotto, he gave over the search for that time; “but resolved to come again the next day provided with candles and a tinder-box, which I had made of the lock of one of the muskets, with some wild-fire in the pan.” Was this the tinder-box which he made when cast ashore amongst the wild animals of the famous island, or the result of a brilliant idea for lighting up the cavern he intended for an arsenal?

What an unsatisfactory contrivance on the whole was Defoe’s “musket-lock and

steel pan,” and trigger with square flint, and the highwayman’s deadly pistol, formed on the same principle, and which, if it did not level a man at one end, would assuredly do so at the other. After all, these weapons of our forefathers did much dreadful work surely, if slowly, sometimes.

During our last spring cleaning—popularly known as the “spring fever”—I was rummaging in an old cellar, and turned up, amongst many relics of the “good old times,” a certain japanned box, nine inches long by half as much broad. It contained a lot of small articles, notably a piece of steel with a handle like the crosier of a bishop; a match or two of rough deal splinters, cut to a point, and besmeared with brimstone; and a piece of flint; and a bit of charred linen with a fusty smell. This linen was blackened by having been set on fire, and rapidly extinguished by putting a flat piece of lead upon it.

It was so long since I had seen such a box, that I had much ado to remember how, when I was a boy, an old aunt of mine went down on her knees in the early winter morning, encouraging the kitchen fire to blaze by this round-about method of evolving light and fire for domestic purposes. The method was this, and a cold one it was on a frosty morning: The maid-servant having opened the shutters, knelt down—a very suitable position for dispensing “sacred fire.” She opened the box, took the crosier in one hand, and the flint in the other; and by striking rapidly the one against the other, a spark sprang out upon the bit of burnt linen, technically called tinder. If the spark were fortunate, it caught hold of the fibres of linen, and set them aglow. Then the maid patiently watched the sacred fire run along the tinder whilst she blew it with her mouth, holding the brimstone match to it, till happily a blue flame resulted, from which she lighted her morning candle, and afterwards her fire. Then the tinder-box was closed. It had done its duty for another day.

I have often seen the operation performed, and have frequently collected nice pieces of flint from the outlying wolds, where it prevailed, to bring them home for the domestic tinder-box, or to give to less fortu-

nate neighbors, who, like the unhappy virgins of old, had lost their light, for want of trimming, or who had mislaid the spark-producing mineral.

Considering all this had to be gone through every morning and everywhere, except where fires were kept alight all night, one looks back on those days with surprise. But then there was no other way. What would our young fellows with their pretty match-boxes think, if they had to light their cigarettes in this primitive style? There were no cigars lighted in the streets; all had to be done at the temple of light, the orthodox fire. There was no such thing as carrying fire in your waist-coat pocket, with a French picture and a hundred lights for a penny. In the times when the curfew rang at eight o'clock every night, for all good people to put out their lights and fires, what a fuss there must have been amongst the men and maidens bringing back light and fire from heaven to earth again! The world has spun round many times since then.

But the tinder-box died hard, and it was long before this means of evoking light was snuffed out altogether. The dear old tinder-box, how we ought to value it, as the precursor of all the cheap lights, and better, of the present hour! Let us hope that there may be a tinder-box placed in every antiquarian museum, to show unbelieving men what used to be, and to show also how much can be done in half a century in the way of lighting up an old world cheaply and effectually.

All sorts of things were tried before the right idea was hit upon, but it came at last. At one time we used the old phosphorus bottle, and I remember well how a distinguished friend and myself nearly set a house on fire during the composition of one of these bottles, intended to light a match by simply inserting it therein and withdrawing it for the atmospheric air to act upon it. A sudden flame was the inevitable result.

After the match-bottle period came long tiresome trials of rubbing prepared matches between pieces of sand-paper. This was a great improvement on the old plan, for a candle could be lighted in the middle of the night without inconvenience. The tinder-box and strike-a-light were now doomed. Then came the red-tipped fusees, which were broken off the brown pasteboard as on occasion required. These were a cleanly

and useful invention, and served the use of the public for many years. They had a great run, and were a veritable success. But the world was taken by storm when some genius introduced the wax taper known as a vesta match, a marvel of "sweetness and light," so daintily made—about an inch in length, one might apply the words of Hood to it,—

Fashioned so slenderly,
Young and so fair,

with its brown-tipped waxen fibres, no thicker than whipcord. Was there ever a brighter idea? And it holds good to this hour. It ought to have made the fortune of the inventor, and perhaps did so. It was the outcome of a great thought—a scintillation, something like what Byron or Goethe would have given mankind if they had dabbled in chlorate of potash and phosphorus.

After this splendid addition to public utility, with a tiny box to strike the light upon, there came a host of claimants, and the fully developed lucifer-match for ordinary uses, the making of which employs so many hands, and requires such large manufacturing appliances in our large towns. In the way of merchandise and the introduction of a new trade, as well as in personal comfort, what a chasm has been bridged over since the time of the obsolete tinder-box! Matches that strike in their own way, on their own box; vesuvians, and fusees, highly odoriferous, that deal out light with the persistence of a squib or a rocket. And not only have lucifer-matches introduced a new trade, but the manufacture of boxes to contain them has created a new industry. In almost every shop-window you see some device for retaining the precious match—in German or real silver, in papier-mache, in pasteboard, wood, or copper, in tin or leather, or iron or china. There are all sorts of contrivances; boxes in animal and bird forms, and illimitable vases, all containing the ubiquitous little match for boudoir and bedroom, and pocket and mantel-shelf.

Shall we imperil our safety by all this luminosity and pyrotechny? No; we cannot dispense with these valuable aids to light and convenience. Perhaps the future may produce greater wonders as light-givers; but alongside the old tinder-box in the museum, let us place the vesta taper, the vesuvian fusee, and the common striking-

match yclept lucifer, just to show what modern science, as opposed to the science of old days, can accomplish when it takes a thing in hand. We have well-nigh forgotten the old light, and have got the new one, that despises

flint and sand-paper and steel; and there is no fear that we shall play with the fire and the light until we tire or burn our fingers, or that we shall ever wish ourselves back amongst the glooms of the tinder-box.

WHICH ?

BY JOHN NAPIER.

IF thou art false as thou art fair,
And false the fairest fair may be,
Again the wondrous power to snare,
Again the siren's self we see.
There's danger in those dimpling smiles,
It glances from that witching e'e;
And he who would escape thy wiles,
Must quickly from the tempter flee.

For better far, as sages tell,
From fickle fair to bid adieu,
Than fall beneath the magic spell
Of charms the heart may ever rue.

Beware, if false, of beauty bright!
Beware that luring beacon's ray!
For oh! the love that trusts its light
May drift a wreck ere dawn of day.

But if thou 'rt true as thou art fair,
Art leal in heart, though seeming gay,
Wouldst ever constant prove, and ne'er
With faithful heart all faithless play,
Then thou 't a gem worth more than gold,
More precious than the ruby rare,
More to be prized than wealth untold,
True heart enshrined in form so fair.

FOR EVER.

BY D. H.

ONE November evening in the year 1846, the weather being moist, sleet falling fast, and the street sloppy and dreary, a young man was strolling in the city of Strasbourg, under the Grandes Arcades; and the two or three dim gas-lamps intended to light the old and obscure passages were scarcely sufficient to enable belated wanderers to see farther than five or six yards before them.

The young man walked with unsteady gait, and his manner indicated that he was in a decidedly bad humor. He did not observe that another person was advancing from the opposite direction until they both paused suddenly in front of each other.

The gentleman who thus unexpectedly disturbed the cogitations of the nocturnal and absent-minded promenader was the first to speak.

"Sir," said he, with a strong south-country accent, "will you oblige by informing me how to say the words 'For ever,' in German?"

"*Auf immer*,' sir," replied the young man, promptly.

"Oh, thank you, sir!" replied the other.

Then resuming his way, he repeated aloud, "*Auf immer!*" Ah, yes—"*Auf immer!*"

As he proceeded, he took from his thick overcoat a pocket-book, and stopping for an instant, wrote on a page the words "*Auf immer*;" after which he replaced the book and continued his route, repeating his newly-acquired German phrase to himself.

"*Auf immer!*" repeated the other young man to himself. "*Auf immer!* What in the world can he want to know that for, at half-past eight o'clock at night? Perhaps I have been assisting him to make love to some pretty Alsatian maiden who is not a proficient in any language but her own. A declaration of love, eh? The deuce take love, and the women, too!"

That a young fellow of twenty-five should so express himself as to love and women seemed puzzling; but so it was. This young Strasbourgian, Augustus Weiss, sincerely believed in neither the one nor the other. He had made his first essay some time before in a very pretty romance, which had failed of a successful issue through the timidity of the young lady concerned.

As he reviewed the details of his past

mischance, Augustus Weiss arrived at the end of the Arcades. The sleet had deepened into snow, and he was quickening his pace to descend the passage steps, when his foot struck against something which the flickering light of a gas-lamp enabled him to perceive was a pocket-book. He picked it up, and continued his way as best he could over the uneven ground, which was in some places paved with cobble-stones, in others asphalted, and in many parts strewn with remains of materials that had served to cover the floors of the Arcades. At length the snow abated, and the young man's progress became easier as he hastened onward to his home in the Rue Merciere. In passing, however, he did not fail to cast a glance strongly expressive of both anger and regret at one of the first houses in the Rue des Serruriers. After entering his room he set about examining the prize he had found. The pocket-book was a new one, and contained a number of bank-notes; but there was neither letter nor card to indicate the name of the owner.

The next morning, before going to the office in which he was employed, Augustus Weiss proceeded to the advertising department of a local newspaper, the *Courrier du Bas-Rhin*, which was situated in the Place Saint-Thomas—a locality peculiarly peaceful and silent, where a dozen or so of slender sycamores vegetated lazily in the shade of the Protestant church of Saint-Thomas, and sheltered to some extent beneath their scanty foliage the stalls of six or eight vendors of fruit and vegetables.

Augustus entered the publishing room of the *Courrier*, and informed the representative of the newspaper—then in its infancy, as at the period alluded to it had reached only its third number—that he was desirous of announcing in its columns the godsend he had found in the street.

"I am sorry," said the manager, "to lose at one time two advertisements; but doubtless this is the owner of the pocket-book," pointing to a man who stood close by.

The person indicated, who had arrived a few minutes prior to Augustus, was asking the charge for an insertion of the particulars respecting his lost property. He was a man of about thirty, with florid complexion and eyes and hair of an intensely black hue.

Augustus Weiss held out the pocket-book.

"I am very pleased, sir," he said, "to be able to restore your property to you."

"The pocket-book is mine, sir," replied the stranger, "and yet I scarcely know how to convince you of the fact. Pray where did you find it?"

"Under the Grand Arcades."

"Yesterday evening, at about half-past eight?"

"Yes, about that time."

"Then you are the man who kindly told me how to say the words 'For ever'—*Au immer*?"

"Really, I did not recognize you again, sir."

"Ah, yes! I had taken out my pocket-book for the purpose of writing down those tiresome words. It was fearfully cold, and I hastily returned the book, as I thought, to my pocket; but instead of doing so, I must have placed it between my under and over coats—and that is how it fell to the ground. But, as neither of us has any further business here," continued the stranger, as he raised his hat to the advertisement manager, "will you permit me to offer you some refreshment?"

"With all my heart," replied Augustus; and the two young men left the office together.

"Mr. Maurice Cazenave, of Nismes," said the south-countryman, by way of self-introduction.

"Mr. Augustus Weiss," returned the other, in a similar manner.

"Now, Mr. Weiss," said Cazenave, "as you are a Strasbourg man, you ought to have your favorite tavern. Let us go there."

"The house I frequent most is the 'Dolphin,' near the cathedral," replied Weiss.

"A house I happen to know," said Cazenave, "although I have been in Strasbourg only one month. I know the Dolphin very well."

Five minutes later the two young men were seated at a table in that celebrated tavern, having before them two glasses of the splendid white-frothed beer for which the city is famous.

"Let us see, Mr. Weiss," commenced Cazenave, after they had tasted and duly appreciated the nut-brown beverage, "you are an honest fellow, and have rendered me a service. What can I do for you in return?"

"Oh, I really don't know!"

"Tut, tut, tut! There is always something on a man's mind, or one thing or an-

other that he wants, particularly at your age; and if I can be useful to you"—

"I have something on my mind, certainly; but, my dear sir, you could not do anything to aid me there."

"Nevertheless"—

"No; the best wishes are powerless in my case."

"Then it is a love affair?"

"Yes."

"Ah, well, tell me about it."

"What earthly good would that do? Your sympathy would be valueless in the matter."

"Tell me, all the same. In the first place, I will pledge myself to profound secrecy. I will not ask you for name, address, or any question that borders on the inquisitive. Tell me only the outline of your story, and then—who knows? Confidence for confidence; I also have a love affair in Strasbourg, although I have resided here only a few weeks. Now make your candid confession. You are in love?"

"Ah, well, yes!"

"Is she pretty?"

"Adorable, good and intelligent—in short, a marvel."

"Brunette or blonde?"

"Blonde, with very dark blue eyes."

"Like my young lady. Good! I observe we have similar tastes. And does she love you?"

"She tells me so, and I believe it."

"Continue."

"Oh, all was going along very well. I am clerk to a solicitor, and have saved a little money, which, if added to an ordinary dowry, would enable me to purchase a country practice—our ambition was not very great; and now at the present moment there is just such a practice to be disposed of at Brumath. I know the owner, and he has offered it to me on very advantageous conditions; but the father of my intended has recently turned completely round in his manner towards me. I was formerly admitted to the house, and all appeared to receive me with smiles. About three weeks since, without my knowing anything of the why or the wherefore, he changed his mind about the matter. I was all but accepted; and now he thinks that my position is too humble, and for the last eight days I have been refused admission to his house, and have been given to understand that the reputation of his daughter may be endangered by my visits."

"And the young lady?"

"I see her all the same; we meet at the house of a friend. I proposed that we should cut the affair short and make a bolt of it; but she preaches patience, and wishes me to wait a while. It drives me almost out of my senses."

"I also am somewhat unsettled in my mind just at present."

"Like me?"

"Why, no! It is absolutely the contrary—except that it is exactly the same thing in the end."

"Let us have it; it is your turn now."

"With regard to myself, it is not money that is wanting, as you will see, nor the consent of the father; but it is the daughter herself who hasn't yet convinced me that I have made the impression on her heart which I desire to do. What I mean is that at times she is very capricious and has such droll ideas! Just fancy—it is now a month since I arrived here from Nismes! I came to take possession of some property in this town, an aunt of mine having left me twenty-four thousand pounds or thereabouts—I don't know exactly how much—besides house property and land let on leases that are yet unexpired, mortgages, loans, and a heap of other matters, very good investments, but very much muddled, so that it will require some time here to put things straight. Business caused me to become acquainted with a good man who has a daughter—oh, such an enchanting girl, with a pretty Alsatian accent! I beg pardon for this digression. She is the blonde with the blue eyes of whom I have already spoken to you—a girl who can look you through and through when she likes. I fell in love at first sight—in short, I forgot all about money, mortgages, and securities, and was desperately smitten. I just gave a hint of my feelings to the father, who seemed to have guessed all about it beforehand. Very well; he accepted me most readily, and I am installed as her lover. Yes, that is a certainty; but I don't make any progress with my suit. I don't exactly know how I stand with regard to her affections—she has so many new ideas and caprices. For instance, she absolutely insists that her husband shall understand German. She pretends that it is essential in a household, as you can engage French servants, and say all that you have to say before them, without their understanding."

"Oh, oh—that explains to me why you wanted yesterday evening the words 'For ever' translated into German!"

"Exactly. I was about to call on the good man, and I wished to say in German to his daughter, 'I shall love you for ever!'"

"Did you say it to her?"

"Perfectly, thanks to you. She appeared to be delighted with my progress, and at the same time looked wonderfully handsome."

"Ah, well, then of what have you to complain?"

"I fear her compliance with her father's wishes will not continue."

"You must have courage; besides, we can see each other and talk things over—in German, if you have a desire to acquire that language."

"I wish it above all things, and am deeply obliged by your kindness, for though I might have engaged a very accomplished teacher, still he was an elderly man, to whom I could not express myself confidentially, as I am able to do to you. You see," continued Cazenave, "there is no false delicacy about me. You have rendered me an important service, and I am your debtor. How much money will be wanted for the purchase of the practice of which you spoke? Where did you say the place was?"

"Brumath."

"It is not the name of the place that I care for—that is of no consequence to me; but I will advance you the amount in ready cash, if you will allow me."

"I really don't know how I could lay myself under so great an obligation."

"That is absurd! You understand I owe you a requital for your honesty. Now, you see, it is all arranged. Get your conveyance documents prepared as early as you please. On the day after to-morrow I will meet you here at eight o'clock in the evening; you can give me a lesson in German, and we can talk over our love affairs in a quiet way, as we have already done. By-the-by, before we part, I wish to tell her this evening that I shall love her everlastingly. I know how to conjugate the verb 'to love,' but those terrible adverbs floor me completely. How do you render the word 'everlastingly'?"

"Ewig," replied Augustus.

"Right—*ewig*! My stars, what a language!" Cazenave added, as he shrugged his shoulders. "And to think that I am to

spend my time in learning it! But what would I not do? When she looks at me with her large blue eyes, I believe that she could induce me to learn Chinese. On the day after to-morrow, then, dear sir."

And the two young men rose from their seats and left the tavern, wishing each other good-day as they parted.

On the day appointed, the next day, and for eight days following, the two new friends met regularly at the Dolphin, where the young Alsatian gave the south-countryman lessons, not in German, but that which is almost the same thing, the *patois* of Strasbourg; and their conversations generally commenced in the following style:—

"Well, my good friend," Maurice Cazenave would say, "how does the love affair go on? Do things appear to you to be more satisfactory?"

"Not at all," Augustus Weiss would reply. "I have heard indirectly that the father will not permit my name to be mentioned in his house."

"What, not since you have purchased the country practice?"

"He has not yet mentioned the subject, so far as I can learn; he appears to have other views of a more ambitious character. I hear that he has found a *Croesus* for a son-in-law."

"Have patience, my friend, have patience! You have the daughter on your side, and I am here to assist you."

"Thanks. And what progress are you making, may I ask?"

"Oh, capital progress, thanks to you! I am going ahead step by step."

"So much the better."

"Your turn will come. If you have no objection, we will both be married on the same day, and I will defray the cost of the two weddings."

"I am sadly afraid that mine will not cost much."

"Don't despair. Faint heart never won fair lady."

After these confidences they went to work at the Strasbourgian *patois* with a will that did credit to both teacher and scholar.

On the day of the twelfth lesson Augustus Weiss came with a face radiant with delight, while the south-countryman appeared to him to look somewhat glum and crestfallen.

"Well," said Maurice Cazenave, "how are you getting on?"

"Oh," replied Weiss, "things are improving! I have seen her, and have had a talk with her, and she has given me great hope. She has done a great deal, and insisted on so much that her father seems inclined to give way; and as soon as I am fairly launched in my office"—

"All in good time, my friend."

"How about yourself?" inquired Weiss.

"Things are not looking at all bright for me," was the reply.

"I am extremely sorry to hear that; we should have been so very jolly all together."

"No; it is very annoying. My sweetheart has such whimsical ideas! It is not a question of speaking German now; she has made up her mind not to leave Strasbourg."

"Why?"

"That is the question! Between ourselves, I believe that it is only a pretence to get rid of me, knowing, as she does well, that my interests make it imperative that I should reside in the south. It is a pure invention."

"Oh, don't be discouraged in that way! Handsome women are sometimes very capricious, and you have told me that she is very pretty."

"As for that, she is enough to turn a man's brain."

"Have courage then! I am going to teach you some Alsatian phrases that will cause her to laugh more than ever, and her whimsical notions will disappear."

"Exactly so; but all these changes and uncertainties greatly interfere with my other affairs. I am busily engaged in looking over my newly-acquired property; but, were I to remain in Strasbourg, I should not be able to make the best of my estates elsewhere."

"Let the property stand over for a time, and persevere with the lady you wish to make your wife. Later on you will still be master of what you possess, and then you can reside where you please."

"That you believe to be best? Let it be so then!"

And once more they resumed the lesson in Strasbourg *patois*.

Some days afterwards the aspect of affairs was again changed; it was Cazenave who came in a joyous mood, whilst Weiss was evidently overburdened with grief.

"A-ha," cried the south-countryman, "you have done quite right in encouraging me to press my suit vigorously! All is very

much altered; she is now willing to go where I choose, and has no longer any desire that I should make myself proficient in German. How are you progressing?"

"I have no good news to tell you. The father is decidedly too ambitious to secure his daughter's happiness. I have boldly communicated to him that I am now the owner of a practice. A solicitor's practice is not sufficient for him. My poor girl is sadly grieved; the dear creature has tried her utmost to persuade him; but never before has he shown such determination."

"What does he mean? That the practice you have purchased is not sufficiently large? Ah, well, my friend, we will try to reckon with the covetous old wretch! This is what I have resolved on. As we shall not reside at Strasbourg, I shall not be able to attend personally to the property to which I have succeeded, nor shall I have time to conduct the sale of it myself; it will consequently be necessary to employ a representative here to watch over my interests, one in whom I could place every confidence, and in whose hands I could safely leave all my affairs. Now you are evidently an honest man. I have proved you to be so, have I not? Very well; I will appoint you my agent at a salary of two hundred and fifty pounds a year, independently of the solicitor's practice altogether, which will remain as we originally intended it. Now don't you think that this arrangement will make the stingy old fellow alter his mind?"

"I hope it will."

"If the daughter really loves you and desires to become your wife, most certainly she will win her father over to her way of thinking."

"Oh, I am satisfied that she loves me sincerely! She has made me promise to be patient, and she has pledged herself finally to agree to all my proposals."

"So much the better. I thank you very much for the lessons, for which I have no longer any occasion; besides, I am very much engaged. I have some purchases to make—presents, in fact, for the wedding—so we will meet again this day week, when I trust you will be the bearer of better news."

One week afterwards the south-countryman and the Alsatian met again at their usual rendezvous. Augustus was the first to arrive. His eyes sparkled with pleasure; indeed he looked perfectly contented and

happy. So pleased was he that he did not notice the troubled look of his friend, who soon afterwards joined him.

"Ah, here you are!" said the latter, in a depressed tone of voice.

His sorrowful accent struck the Strasbourgian.

"What is the matter?" asked Augustus.

"The matter is that my love-affair has terminated. This time it is quite finished—the shell is broken."

"I am curious to know how that has come about."

"I myself can scarcely understand how it happened. First of all, the daughter received me very coldly; then the father, in a roundabout and confused kind of way, informed me that it had been decided to decline my offer of marriage—there was another lover in the field—the damsel was very headstrong—it was not left for him to determine—she had bluntly refused any other suitor but the one chosen by herself."

"It is a piece of rank stupidity!"

"At any rate, it is a piece of stupidity finally decided on. She has twisted her father round her finger, and at a moment when I believed all was settled and I had commenced to purchase the jewelry. See—here is a beautiful bracelet—a masterpiece of workmanship!"

"It seems like a fatality," remarked Weiss. "After what you have said, I hardly like to tell you the happy turn which my suit has taken. Thanks to you and the advantages you have placed in my way, the father has consented. I have to see him to-day at his own house; in short, the door is no longer closed against me."

"Ah, well, I am exceedingly pleased to hear you say so! It will be a consolation to me to know that I have done some good here."

"I hope that will not be your only recompense."

"Be that as it may, you will find all the documents you require for your agency, as also the amount for your professional practice, at the office of my lawyer, Mr. Strohmeyer, in the Rue des Serruriers. I shall leave Strasbourg immediately. You have a very fine cathedral, I admit, but your citizens drink too much beer—that is their misfortune. I have nothing to regret. A horrid country and a wretched people! Of course I do not allude to you personally; on the contrary, I wish you every prosperity,

and a happy future to both yourself and your intended. I should like to offer her a wedding-present—this bracelet, for instance; but unfortunately I have had initials engraved on it. See! But I will have it changed," and the south-countryman opened the casket.

Augustus Weiss, while looking at the jewel admiringly, suddenly uttered a cry of surprise.

"Is it not a magnificent bracelet?" asked Cazenave.

"Yes, yes; but what a coincidence!"

"How?"

"Why, 'C. H.' are the initials of my intended's name!"

"Really?"

"Yes, assuredly—Caroline Helmstetter!"

"What—Miss Caroline Helmstetter!" cried the south-countryman, as he made a prodigious effort to speak the name, "Is it Miss Caroline Helmstetter who is to be your wife?"

"Yes."

"Miss Caroline, the daughter of the receiver of taxes, No. 3, Rue des Serruriers?"

"Yes, that is right. Do you know her then?"

"Do I not? Why, that is the young lady to whom I have been paying my addresses!"

"It cannot be possible! We have been hunting over the same ground!" exclaimed Augustus.

"Or rather I have been hunting over your ground!" said Cazenave.

"And, when I was instructing you in Strasbourg German, I was actually putting words in the mouth of my rival!" said Augustus.

"And, as to myself, what else was I doing when I bought the practice of a solicitor in your name?" asked Cazenave.

"Just so! And, when I was encouraging you, and urging you to persevere with your suit, I was unquestionably working against my own interests!"

"And, in appointing you my agent, I was destroying my best chance! I now understand how it was that we were never both satisfied at the same time. Truly we are the heroes of a ludicrous romance!"

"Yes, but of one that will have the effect of greatly altering the complexion of things."

"Not at all, my dear friend—not at all! It is I who have come and unintentionally interfered with your projects; I am the one

who ought in honor to withdraw. The young lady loves you; marry her—become a solicitor, a land-agent, and a father of a large family."

"And you positively renounce her?"

"I pledge you my word that I will never return to vex you. What I have said I will religiously adhere to. Good-by!"

"And are you actually going to leave Strasbourg?"

"Sooner than ever! Stay—here is the bracelet! Present it in my name to your betrothed as my marriage-gift."

"And shall we continue to be good friends?"

"Yes," replied the south-countryman, as he finally and warmly pressed the hand of the young Alsatian; "and permit me to add the words you taught me on the occasion of our first meeting—*Auf immer!*—For Ever!"

PHILIP AND LOUISE.

BY HESTER C. LAUREATE.

THE names given in the title of this story are cut in the stone walls of a room in an old building in France, which was once the property of Cardinal Mazarin. The story runs thus:—

It was a cold and cheerless night during the regency of Anne of Austria. It was wet, too; so wet, that the garments of a man who was passing through the gardens of the Palais Royal, had become thoroughly saturated.

He made his way hastily, nor slackened his speed until he reached a gate, the key of which he had lost, or forgotten. After a vain search he uttered an exclamation of surprise or dismay.

The situation was, indeed, an unpleasant one, for the path he had traversed led only to the apartments of the queen-mother, Anne of Austria, and the hour was an unreasonable one. Moreover, he could only enter his own apartments through this gate, for the man shivering with cold and fear, was the wily statesman, Cardinal Mazarin. For some time he walked back and forth, in sheer vexation, and then was forced by extreme cold to attempt climbing the high fence with iron railings, that seemed to defy his efforts to reach the haven he sought. It was just possible he might do this without disturbing the guard, who were stationed at either end of the fence.

But accustomed as he was to political climbing, he was in this case destined to ignominious failure, for his cardinal's robe caught an iron point, just as he thought himself safely over, and he could only call lustily for help.

This adventure of the cardinal was first

whispered in the salons, and then spoken boldly of, by the young count Philip de Villeneuve, who was a gentleman of great wealth and very handsome. He had lived a somewhat gay and reckless life, was admired by Queen Anne, and was a favorite at court.

The antiquarian Delarue asserts that the queen-mother was at that time secretly married to Mazarin, who feared and was jealous of, the young count, and had long been seeking some way to effect his ruin. Now he was resolved. Fear and jealousy had become bitter hatred, and on a charge of treason Philip was imprisoned.

He was not long, however, in making his escape, and astonished the lords and ladies of the court, by appearing among them in velvet doublet, gold fringe, and point lace, entertaining all within his circle, by relating his experience as a prisoner, until the entrance of the lord cardinal, when he was again arrested, and taken back to his cell.

Again the count escaped from his hated prison, and again appeared among his friends in court dress, which news was immediately carried to the cardinal. Before that evening had ended, and while he was conversing with Clara de Hautefort, the guards led him from the brilliant salon, and placed him, manacled and blindfolded, in a close carriage, so that the gay courtier had no idea where they were taking him; but knew by the distance that it must be far away from the Bastille, the gay court he loved so well, and the fair-haired Anne of Austria, whose vanity he had flattered by his boyish devotion, but whose displeasure he had incurred, by an unfortunate and ill-timed pleasantry. At length the horses

slackened their pace, and, leaving the carriage, the guards took the prisoner through long and winding passages, keeping him blindfolded, until within the room which was henceforth to be his prison. This room was low and long. The stone walls formed an arch overhead, and the windows were barred and double barred; while everything around was mouldy and fast going to decay.

Before the sense of bewilderment had passed away, his jailor came hobbling over the stones on crutches, for he was lame, and had but one arm.

"Why am I here?" the count asked, looking gloomily around. "The Bastile was better than this."

"It is for the cardinal's pleasure, that young nobles are sent here; you need not ask me why. How should I know, indeed? My orders are, that between us, Louise and I, we keep you safe from all harm, allowing you no opportunity of making your escape under penalty of death, do you hear? Death! Should Count Philip de Villeneuve escape us, we are both to be put to death. No hat and cloak floating in the water below, no figure placed upon yonder bed will save us; for should you escape by stratagem from this place, your jailors are to be hanged in the courtyard below."

Louise and I!

"Louise!" repeated the young nobleman. "Who is Louise?"

"My daughter. I am too lame to go back and forth all day long. Louise will be your keeper; so, while I keep guard at the entrance, Louise will be in this passage, and will attend you faithfully. Never fear, she will guard you carefully, for—she had orders from the lord cardinal."

"Is she young?" the prisoner asked.

"Yes, young enough; twenty or thereabouts; mayhap you'll fall in love with her."

The count observed a sarcastic smile upon the father's ghastly countenance, as he went hobbling away through the long passage.

The remark was a cruel one, for a father to make concerning an unfortunate child; but disappointment had made him bitter, for he had once hoped great things from the great beauty of Louise's face.

"Young, twenty or thereabouts," mused the prisoner. "Not a bad idea. I will fall in love with her—apparently, and then she will find some means to effect my escape, for it is only by strategy that I can hope to escape from this place. They will be vigi-

lant, if their lives depend on my being kept here. Yes, I will fall in love with this girl. She need not be hanged for it, either; for, if she liberates me, I can take her away from here, and provide for her handsomely; there is an old place of mine"—

Here his meditations were interrupted by the turning of a key. The door slowly opened, and what did he see? deformity in its most hideous aspect—dwarfed deformity.

Was this the daughter, and had the father make a cruel jest of her misfortune? Love, or even the semblance of it, in connection with such an object, filled his soul with a shuddering horror. When he had sufficiently overcome this feeling he looked again; this time into the face of his strange jailor. Any of the court beauties would have given all the wealth they possessed for such beauty as the count looked upon for the first time.

A complexion of wonderful purity and fairness, an abundance of hair falling in soft masses upon the bent shoulders; eyes large and lustrous; features as regular as though chiseled from marble, and an expression which changed rapidly from sympathy to sarcasm, as the prisoner, forgetful of all else, studied her face. At length she spoke:—

"The Count Philip de Villeneuve was not aware that the cardinal is a collector of curiosities. I am a specimen—Louise Bertole, at your service."

Her voice was so singularly sweet, her pronunciation so perfect, that the count could not but answer her respectfully, notwithstanding the sarcasm hidden beneath its sweetness.

"I beg pardon, Louise, if my steady gaze has offended; but I am so much bewildered, and everything seems so strange, that I fear I have forgotten the manners becoming a gentleman."

"There will be no need to remember them here," she said, sadly; "you will see no one but my father and myself. I came to bring you bread."

She had answered with such gentle dignity that he was at a loss for words; and he commenced eating the bread she had brought him, looking down upon it, while she in turn studied his face.

Then she brought him water to drink, and left him to his musings, which were of a different nature than before her coming.

Had this gay courtier heart enough to abandon the project he had formed, of gaining his liberty through the love he should

awaken in the heart of one whom he had imagined to be as beautiful in form as in features; when, instead of the ideal he had formed, he saw an object of pity, and from which a man would naturally shrink?

He had lived a gay dissolute life, and his heart was not one to be touched easily, but his plans were disconcerted. It would not be easy, even could he conquer the aversion he felt, to make this girl believe that he was even interested in her, for in this one interview he comprehended the character with which he had to deal. To such sensitiveness as is ever the portion of unfortunate beings like Louise Bertole, was added the sarcasm taught her by bitter experience. She had lived her life alone. Years ago, when she was a child, other children had shrank from the caresses she would have lavished upon them, and her father had not been able to love her, as he had loved the perfect children whose lives had not been spared to him.

"It will take time," he thought; "but this girl must love me. I can see no other way of obtaining my freedom."

Gradually he gained the confidence of Louise, and learned that the place in which he was imprisoned was a house belonging to Mazarin, and was a kind of prison, where the cardinal confined his own personal enemies, or more properly speaking, those courtiers he hated for some real or supposed influence which they had over the queen-mother.

At length the prisoner reproached his keeper with being harsh and unkind to him, as she was at times, the manner having become habitual to her; but in her heart there was all kindness toward the young and handsome nobleman.

"You should not treat me unkindly, Louise," he said, "because others have failed to understand the beauty of your soul." And so with gentle, tender words he melted the ice which was an outer covering only of the deformed girl's heart. Beneath it her heart beat with generous impulses, and true womanly feeling. Still, the approach to the love he had determined on was slow, so slow that when months had passed, he had no longer the desire to win it as a means of obtaining freedom.

In Louise he had found a companion. Her clear subtle intellect had for him a sort of fascination. She had all her life treasured up poetry and romance; had mastered more

of science than his idle life had given him time to do. The loneliness of the prison had become something of the past; the courtier had become a student, the cell a library; for he was not without money from his own estates, and Louise could readily get for him whatever he wished from Paris. He had forgotten to think of her as a repulsive being, as day by day the beauty of her mind revealed itself.

She learned her power, and in this sweet companionship, his mind soared above the selfishness which had dwarfed it. In this strange friendship he had found rest, and waited patiently for the time when his persecutors should be induced, through the persuasions of his friends, to liberate him.

To Louise this companionship had opened a new world, and her love became devotion. Anxiously she watched the fading color, and saw the face which was to her as the face of an angel, grow thin and colorless.

The room, with low arches and stone walls, was dark and damp; Philip had been accustomed to sunshine, warmth and liberty, until he was so unfortunate as to incur the cardinal's displeasure.

The bread Louise brought him was hardly tasted, and she often contrived to elude the vigilance of the old soldier her father, and carry to Philip's cell delicacies she had prepared. But all seemed of no avail, and he became so sad that even Louise's smiles failed to cheer him. As his strength failed, she nursed him more tenderly, but the fever in his veins was not to be thus destroyed.

"Philip, dear Philip," she said, clasping her small hands in anguish, "you will die here;" then added slowly and distinctly—"you must go away!"

Her tender thoughtfulness, together with a prospect of freedom, invigorated him so much that the color came into his face, and the light to his eyes. Then, as the impossibility of this presented itself to his mind, he sobbed aloud.

"No, Louise, it is quite impossible!" he answered, at length.

"Nothing is impossible to those who are determined," she said; and so left him to wonder at her courage and devotion.

The following evening Louise opened the door, saying, "Philip, you must follow me."

He followed her through passage after passage, as one in a dream, until at length they stood beneath the canopy which is at night studded with stars. It was to him as

a glimpse of heaven, and the air seemed to cool the fever in his veins. After breathing it in silence for a few moments, he said, giving a sigh of relief:—

"Now, my sweet friend and comforter, I am ready to go in; back to my prison cell. I shall be better for this."

"Back, Philip!" she exclaimed, "when I have everything planned for your escape? No! Go and be happy."

"Never!" he answered. "Do I not know that *my* life will be *your* death?"

"It may not be so," she said, in her beautiful renunciation of self; "and it is certain death for you to re-enter those walls. Do I not know the prison fever? Philip, I bid you go; to remember poor Louise only as a dream, which, although frightful at first, you did not fear at the last."

"Neither do I fear to meet my fate. I am no coward! Come," he said, taking her hand, "let us return to our books."

Then from the depths of those lustrous eyes the soul looked out, as she answered with unflinching devotion:—

"Philip, I cannot let you die. Go!"

The word was a command, and for the moment the deformed girl a queen. She had determined on his release; and he allowed himself to hope that he could return, and take her, with her father, to a place of safety, before Mazarin was aware of his escape, as he did not intend to present himself at court as in times past.

"I will go," he said, fondly kissing her fair brow; but, Louise, I will not desert you, for I shall soon return, and place you with

your father in a home which shall be all your own."

With those words he disappeared, and Louise Bertole kneeling, clasped her hands, and breathed a prayer for his safety.

He reached his friends; but the fever was not to be baffled; and during his ravings his friends concealed him carefully. At length, when consciousness and sufficient strength returned, he was told that Louise and her father had been placed in close confinement, and were sentenced to death.

He remembered the favor the queen-mother had sometimes shown him, and hastened to her, to plead with her for her influence with Mazarin in behalf of his liberator and her father. She promised to intercede for them, and he hastened to the prison to carry this encouragement to Louise.

The vengeance of the cardinal had been swift, and the sight Count Philip de Villeneuve saw in the courtyard was one which saddened his future life.

Upon a rude table were stretched two forms, and sheets covered them. Near by was the scaffold.

He was never imprisoned again, as Mazarin's death occurred soon after the events related above; but the shadows of that scaffold hung over him forever, and the serious man who took the place of Count Philip de Villeneuve bore no resemblance to that gay courtier. The tragedy of his prison life had made him seem to himself a ghost among men. The remaining years of his life he devoted to the acquisition of knowledge, and he was called "Philip the Philosopher."

TWILIGHT'S HOUR.

BY GENESSEE RICHARDSON.

A STILLNESS reigns on every side,
A calm and rest;
The dreamy hush of eventide;
And in the west

The crimson lights of sunset's glow
Sink one by one.
Light zephyrs whisper soft and low,
The day is done.

The wave has ceased to bound and roar,
And now is still;

The dusky shades are spreading o'er
The vale and hill.

And slowly, softly, fades away
The mellow light.
Solemn the hour at close of day
That heralds night.

Peacefully rest in gentle sleep
Each tiny flower;
All sound is hushed in silence deep;
'Tis twilight's hour.

WILWAUKEE, WIS., 1888.

SOME CURIOUS WAGERS.

SO far as we can go back in the world's history, we find the rage for making wagers prevalent. The Romans had a great taste for wagers and bets; and they had a conventional form of ratifying these contracts, which consisted in taking from the finger the ring which the higher classes invariably wore, and giving it into the keeping of some third party umpire. One of the wildest bets ever made was that of a physician of the ancient world named Asclepiades. He wagered against Fortune that he would never be ill during his life, under penalty of losing the reputation he had acquired of being the most famous physician of his time. Absurd and impious as was this presumption, he won his wager, although he could not enjoy it, for, at a very advanced period of life, he died from the effects of a fall.

The Romans were forbidden to bet upon the success of an unlawful game, or indeed of any games whatever, unless they were trials of courage, bodily strength, or skill.

The parliament of Dole, in France, was called upon to decide a very curious wager in the year 1634. It was between two citizens of Pasmes, one of whom had agreed, on consideration of his being paid the sum of twenty-four francs, to furnish the other with a quantity of grains of millet, in proportion to the number of children that should be born within a certain extent of country during one year. He was to hand over one grain for the first child, two for the second, four for the third, and so on, always doubling the number of grains for each successive birth. The number of children born within the specified time was sixty-six; and such an enormous quantity of grains of millet had to be supplied to meet the conditions of the agreement, that the contracting party demanded the canceling of the bet, on the ground that it was founded upon an impossible condition. The court agreed at once that it was impossible for the contract to be carried out; and decided that the person who had received the twenty-four francs should repay them to his opponent, and should give him an additional sum of twenty-four francs. Surely this was anything but a just judgment, for it was impossible that the gainer could have lost. He made his calcu-

lations, and was betting upon the ignorance of the loser. It was therefore a wager based upon bad faith, and should have been annulled altogether.

A wager was made early in the last century by a banker named Bulliot. He was a firm believer in the superstition that if rain falls on St. Swithin's day (July 15), it will also fall, more or less, for forty days after. St. Swithin's day in the year 1725 was very wet; and so Bulliot offered to bet any one who choose to put down his money, that the next forty days would be rainy. So many persons showed a desire to take up this wager, that its terms were reduced to writing as follows: "If, dating from St. Swithin's day, it rains more or little during forty days *successively*, Bulliot will be considered to have gained; but if it ceases to rain for only one day during that time, Bulliot has lost." On these terms, Bulliot bet against all who presented themselves. He was so confident of success that he placed money against articles of value of every description. People brought gold-headed canes, snuff-boxes, jewels, even clothes, and Bulliot wagered as much money against them as he considered they were worth. When his stock of cash came to an end, he issued notes and bills of exchange to such an extent that it was said he had paper money out to the amount of a hundred thousand crowns. All this naturally excited a great deal of public curiosity, and the rash man found himself quite fashionable for the time being. Verses were made in his honor, a play was produced which had him for its hero; in a word he attracted as much attention as if he had been a monarch or a famous statesman. But, unfortunately for Bulliot, St. Swithin was not true to his character. For the first twenty-one days of the stipulated time, more or less rain fell. The twenty-second day, however, was bright and cloudless, and night came on without there being the slightest sign of rain. Bulliot was ruined, and ruined so completely that he was unable to meet the notes and bills that bore his name. The holders of these tried to enforce payment; but the ancient law did not recognize debts of this kind, any more than does the law of more modern days. They were accordingly

non-suited, and their debts declared irrecoverable.

In the early part of the present century, sporting men were fond of betting on the duration of the lives of celebrities. Napoleon I. was especially the subject of these wagers. It is related that at a dinner party in 1809, Sir Mark Sykes offered to pay anyone who would give him a hundred guineas down, a guinea a day so long as Napoleon lived. The offer was taken by a clergyman present; and for three years Sir Mark paid him three hundred and sixty-five guineas per annum. He then thought he had thrown away enough money, and disputed further payment. The recipient, who was not at all disposed to lose his comfortable annuity, brought an action, which, after lengthy litigation, was decided in favor of the baronet.

A foreign prince staying in Paris made a heavy bet with a member of the Imperial Club that he—the prince—would, in the course of the next two hours, be arrested by the police without committing any offence or provoking the authorities in any fashion. The way he won his wager was by dressing himself in a tattered old blouse, a pair of mouldy boots full of holes, and a disreputable burlesque of a hat. Thus attired, he walked up to one of the most aristocratic cafes in Paris, and, seating himself at a table, called for a cup of coffee. The waiter, as was only natural, did not care about serving so suspicious-looking a customer before he was assured that payment would be forthcoming, so he told the prince that he must pay in advance. Upon this, his highness pulled a bundle of bank-notes out of his pocket, and picking out one of considerable value, told him to take the price of the coffee out of it and bring back the change. The man immediately went in search of the proprietor of the cafe, who, when he had heard the facts of the case, ordered the coffee to be served, and at the same time sent to the nearest police station for a *sergent de ville*. The prince was of course arrested, and taken before a commissary of police. He announced his rank, and told his reasons for assuming such an unprincipally costume. The authorities were obdurate at first; but finally, they consented to send the prince under escort to the Imperial Club, where the gentleman with whom the bet had been made proved his identity, and paid his highness the money he had fairly won.

Vieuxtemps, the well-known violinist, used to tell a strange story of a wager which he averred he had really witnessed whilst on a visit to London. It was to the effect that one day as he was walking across London Bridge, a poor wretch jumped up on to the parapet and leaped down into the river. There was at once a rush of eager spectators, and a voice shouted: "I'll bet he drowns!" "Two to one, he'll swim ashore!" "Done!" Meanwhile, Vieuxtemps had hastened to get a boat, and was rowing with a waterman to the rescue of the unhappy creature, who was floundering about, and just managing to keep himself afloat. As they reached him, and were preparing to pull him into the boat, there was a roar from the bridge: "Leave him alone—there is a bet on!" The waterman immediately lay on his oars, refusing to make any further attempt to save the drowning man; and Vieuxtemps saw him sink before his very eyes.

A bet was one made in relation to the Master of the Revels to George II., named Heidegger, whose ugliness it was declared impossible to surpass. One of the courtiers wagered that he would produce some one who should be pronounced uglier than Heidegger. He was allowed a few days in which to unearth his champion, and it is said that he employed them in personally ransacking the worst slums of London. Somewhere in St. Giles' he found an old woman whom he thought sufficiently plain to confront with Heidegger. When the two were put face to face, the judges said that it was impossible to decide which of them was entitled to bear the proud title of "ugliest being in London." A courtier, however, suggested that Heidegger should put on the old woman's bonnet. This he did; and the additional ugliness it gave him was such that he was unanimously declared the winner.

A notorious gambler of the last century finally ruined himself by a very extraordinary bet. He had been playing with Lord Lorn; their stakes had been very high, and luck had gone steadily against him. Exasperated at his losses, he jumped up from the card-table, and seizing a large punch-bowl, said: "For once I'll have a bet where I have an equal chance of winning! Odd or even, for fifteen thousand guineas?" "Odd," replied the peer calmly. The bowl was dashed against the wall, and on the

pieces being counted, there proved to be an odd one. The rash gambler paid up his fifteen thousand guineas; but, if tradition be correct, it was only by selling the last of his estate that he was enabled to do so.

Some years ago, a gentleman made a

heavy bet that he would stand for a day on London Bridge with a tray full of sovereigns fresh from the Mint, which he would be unable to dispose of at a penny apiece. A nursemaid bought one to quiet a crying child; but no more were disposed of.

THE SHADOW OF MILL-DALE.

TRULY it was a weird place, that old mill, standing out black and desolate amid the gay luxuriance of Devonshire coloring. A blue sky, bright, deep, pure, melting away in a distant line of soft haze-shadowed sea, emerald turf contrasting strongly with red rock and clay, masses of foliage bright with autumn tints; and in the midst of all this living beauty the old mill, black, decaying and deserted.

I declare I am getting quite poetical and sentimental about the old place—and that is not like me, sober, steady, Ellen Buzzacott.

I have promised William and Effie to write down their story; but indeed they must be content to have it plain, without any fine writing, for that would be beyond me; and, to my mind, tell the story as plain as you will, its just a romance itself, as good as any of those made-up books, or as bad, I should say.

I began about the old mill because it just came into my mind how pretty Effie looked that autumn day—so long ago now—when she would drag me out, a good three-mile walk, to the place, to go blackberrying, and she turned sixteen, and the stuff cut out for her first long gown! She was our youngest, and we loved her dearly. Ay, through it all we did, though Hannah and Sarah were a bit sharp with her at times; but that was when her young giddy ways reminded them of her mother, who was not ours.

My father, Robert Buzzacott, of Torlea End, married twice; and, with all respect to him, we thought it hard, we three of the first marriage. What did he want with a second wife, and he nearly sixty, though he did not look his age by ten years? I was seven-and-twenty when our own poor mother died. She was a good woman, and she brought us up well. Father could have felt no difference in his house as far as comfort went, for Hannah and Sarah, my eldest

sisters, who had been married and widowed some years before, came home to live, not from lack of means, but because it was the proper place for them to be; and their ways were mother's all over. Both were childless; but Sarah had been the second wife of a distant cousin of our name, and she brought with her his little boy, a dear lad who kept the house cheerful.

We settled in our own minds that father would leave Torlea End to him, as father had no son of his own, and Dick would keep the land in the old name. So it seemed to us very hard that a girl of nineteen, out of a thriftless home, not knowing how to do anything useful, should be made mistress in mother's stead, and put over us steady, experienced women. Her people were gentlefolk who had come down in the world—her father a reckless, improvident fellow, her mother thriftless and proud, full of fine-lady airs, which were hard to keep up amid debts and difficulties. I do not blame poor Euphemia for being glad to escape from her comfortless home; and my father was very good-looking even then, though it could not have been from true love that she married him, with that difference in their ages. Well, one should never judge the dead!

Trying enough she was, poor child, with her airs and flighty ways. But it did not last; before the year was out she lay cold in Torleacombe churchyard, and her baby, a delicate little girl, was left us to bring up. Father was disappointed at first because it was not a boy; but he got over that, and spoilt little Effie as badly as any of us. While he lived he would never part with the child; but he died when she was nearly ten years old; and after that Mrs. Carell, her grandmother, would have her on visits, as was natural, perhaps, but not good for Effie. Her grandmother filled the child's head with nonsense about her pretty face, and she was

a lady on her mother's side, and must not marry among common folk. I do not know that it hurt Effie much. She was a gentle, affectionate girl, fond of her own way, to be sure; but then she always had it—as, for example, on the very afternoon that she dragged me off to sit among the bushes at Mill-dale while she smeared her pretty frock scrambling after blackberries.

How pretty she looked, her dainty little blue-and-white figure changing unconsciously into a hundred graceful attitudes as she reached up among the tangle of red and yellow leaves! As the afternoon waned, some one else came to admire the picture. I could have spared him. My attention was suddenly attracted by a stranger, a tall young man in light-gray clothes, whose general air and bearing distinguished him, even at a distance, from our country-bred neighbors. To my surprise, he went straight over to my sister and took her hand, saying:—

"This is my cousin Effie. Am I right?"

I rose and drew near. Effie stood among the bramble-branches, with one of the prettiest expressions of astonishment on her face.

"And who may you be?" I asked somewhat sharply; but I knew by instinct almost before the answer came.

"I am William Carell, Effie's cousin. Let me see, second cousin is more accurate, I believe. Am I speaking to Miss Buzzacott?"

I nodded, not over-pleased. His face answered for his identity.

"How do you know I am Effie?" inquired the child, with her soft, sweet laugh.

His look answered her, though his words were to me.

"She is the image of Mrs. Carell."

He was right. Effie's delicate face and soft brown eyes were, no doubt, very like what her grandmother's must have been in early days.

The blackberrying was over for that time. I folded my work while he helped Effie with her baskets. I remembered all about him now; he was the great nephew of whom I had heard such talk lately. The Carells had been gentlefolk, as I said, and this was the grandson of James Carell's steady, well-to-do brother, a wealthy Liverpool merchant, who had died. Mrs. Carell loved to talk of her husband's rich relatives; and there had been much said of this William, who was some day to come by Torleacombe on business,

and pay his great-uncle and aunt a visit. So here he was, fine-looking enough, about seven or eight and twenty, I should guess, with a black tie for his father, who had been dead about a year, and look of admiration for his cousin Effie that I was not too glad to see.

"That's a dark old place," he said, looking up at the ruined mill as we turned away. "Was it always so desolate?"

"Oh, there's an awesome tale about it!" cried Effie. "But I mustn't tell it to you; it makes Aunt Ellen nervous;" and she laughed saucily.

"Smugglers, robbers?" said William Carell, smiling. "It looks like it."

"Oh, worse," replied Effie, "much worse! 'Twas here the man lived who sold his soul to the Evil One that he might marry a girl who did not want him, for she was betrothed to a sailor over the sea. Folk say that his wicked spirit walks there; and none dare enter for fear some awful sight should take their wits. The most daresome that ever tried it did not come out the same."

"Come, come, 'tis idle talk!" I said, for there were blacker and more sinful parts in the tale than the child knew, and I could never bear to hear her touch upon them, even though unconsciously.

"You forget your aunt's nerves," said William. "By the by, you are sisters really, are you not?"

"Oh, ay!" answered Effie. "But 'tis all the same. They do be so reverend, I could never go forward not to give them some title; and Dick learned me that."

It was true; we had never checked her, for it seemed more respectful from the child when we were so much older.

"Does Dick"—with an accent of disfavor—"learn you still, whoever he may be?"

"Why, he's my cousin," she exclaimed, "Aunt Sarah's son! My own first cousin, too!"

"And I am but second," said William, his emphasis answering hers. "But let me remind you, on my own account, that I am a whole cousin, while he is but half. Why, really he must be your half-nephew!"

"That he isn't!" persisted Effie, with a little frown. "He is Aunt Sarah's step-son, and she married her third cousin, so there!"

"The result of which is that he is no relation to you at all."

Effie's color rose, as it always did when she was crossed.

"He is Dick," she declared, stoutly, "and I love him dearly!"

"We are such a mixed up family," I interposed, vexed that the child should be willful before a stranger, "'tis hard to set us out in proper relationship. However, you are right, Mr. Carell. My sister's step-son is only a connection of Effie's; but they have grown up together." And I smiled, as not unwilling that he should infer something further, for we three sisters had decided in our hearts how the childish love should end.

When we reached home it was only bare civility to ask Effie's new cousin into tea, though I fancied that Dick, who came to the gate to take Effie's baskets, was not over cordial to the well-dressed young man who carried them. Poor Dick! He had been working hard about the farm, and even when brushed up and made tidy for tea, he looked but a clownish youth beside this easy town-bred gentleman.

The next day Effie's grandmother carried her off to stay at Torredge for a time. We never liked to let her go; but we could not refuse to let the child be sometimes with her mother's people. Still my heart was heavy when she left us, for I feared something.

When she returned I knew what my dread had been; Effie was engaged to William Carell. Mrs. Carell was delighted; and what could we say? Mr. Carell was young, rich, steady, and had excellent prospects. What objection could we make but that we were taken by surprise? The grandmother talked of poor Euphemia's child marrying in her proper sphere, and looked upon us as envious sisters when we pleaded for time. William Carell urged that he loved Effie, and she that she loved him. Not that we could feel convinced that there was more serious feeling on her part than with a child crying for its last new toy. How could there be real love in a ten-days' acquaintance? Mrs. Carell overruled everything; we were tired out with discussions, and gave in.

"Marry in haste, repent at leisure," quoted Sarah.

"Ah," replied Mrs. Carell smoothly, "we all have our little plans for those we love, and it is trying when the lot is differently cast by a Higher Power! How is Mr. Dick? I have not seen him lately."

So Effie was married. What an impossible dream the whole thing seemed! How hard I struggled to awake and find again the true childish Effie, with her short frocks and

blackberry-basket, ignorant of lovers and love-making! Why, on the very morning we set the marriage feast we came upon the tattered geography she had thrown aside to drag me out to Mill-dale!

"To think 'tis not two months since I was saying my lessons to you!" she cried, and burst out laughing; I was nearer tears.

Mrs. Carell took all the charge of Effie's clothes out of our hands. Maybe our notions were old-fashioned as to how a lady should be dressed; but we did protest against all the little money her father had left her being spent on what they called a "*trousseau*." In vain! Mrs. Carell declared that her nephew would make a handsome provision for his wife without her few poor hundreds, and that it was far more important that she should be provided with a little real lace and some handsome jewelry, such as were worn by the fine folk amongst whom she would live. All William's money was invested in a large and prosperous banking concern in Liverpool, and he had taken a large house in one of the prettiest suburbs for his wife, and was furnishing it beautifully.

So the clear, bright December morning dawned, a frosty, sparkling day, and Effie was married in Torleacombe Church. All the countryside came to see the ceremony, and the feast was spread afterwards in the best parlor; then the carriage came round to take the bridal pair away. The child kissed us all; but in her flurry she overlooked Dick, who stood very silent, doing nothing to attract her attention. But as she reached the door, she remembered, and, breaking from her husband, she ran back to throw both her arms round her old play-mate's neck.

"O dear Dick, how did I forget you? Wish me good luck, Dick—do?"

"Good luck to you, Effie," he said, quietly; and then old Mrs. Carell bustled forward.

"There, child, that will do. You will lose your train; don't keep William waiting. Of course Mr. Dick wishes you every blessing, and all that sort of thing." And Effie was gone.

The winter passed away. We heard sometimes from the child, and she seemed always happy and amused. William took her abroad first, and then they came back to settle at Liverpool; and she wrote in great glee of her fine house and carriage. He seemed a good husband, and we tried to feel

content; but we missed her sorely, and often wondered how she got on with his friends—for of course her education had not been equal to theirs. But she was quick at taking up people's ways and manner of speaking, and no doubt her pretty face carried her over many mistakes. She was just at the age to be moulded readily, and as time went by her letters became shorter and fewer, but were better written and expressed; she dropped the country phrases she was wont to use, and with them disappeared much of her childishness. She seemed to be making friends for herself among William's friends, and we were glad, though of course it cut her off from us. By degrees we began to feel a difficulty in writing to her, as our own interests ceased to be hers, and her letters were more about general things. We did not know her life—how could she write about it?

In the second year of her marriage a baby was born, a little boy. Old Mrs. Carell took it upon herself to go to Liverpool, so of course none of us were wanted. I longed to see little Effie, whose own baby days had been spent in my arms; but as she did not ask for me, it was not my place to go forward. My place! How things had changed when there came to be a thought of distance and difference of position between me and the child! Mrs. Carell reported that she was very well and happy, with all her surroundings very handsome, and comfort everywhere, but the baby was a delicate little thing.

Sarah looked very grim when she heard of his birth, for Effie's son shut out Dick's chance of the farm, since father had left it to each of us in succession, and then to the eldest grandson; failing grandsons, it would have gone to Dick. Her disappointment was natural enough, but the lad took it well. Ever since that December wedding he had been longing to get away from Torlea; but Sarah persuaded him to keep with us. Now he would have his way, it being necessary that he should have some occupation in life; so he took a situation in Manchester similar to what his father had held before him. It was another blank in our home.

They need not have troubled so over Effie's poor little child. He did not see his second birthday; and the mother's broken-hearted letter to me was the first natural one I had had from her for months—not that she said much, but the little she did say

was her real self showing in every word. The letter struck me somehow as if grief for her child were not the only trouble that weighed on her. I wrote at once as hearty and loving an answer as I could make up; but that was the last line I, or any of us, had from her. Twice again I wrote, but there was no reply, and the fancy hurt me sorely that maybe she had grown a fine lady, and was offended that I should speak to her in the old fond way. We could not hear of her through Torredge, for old Mrs. Carell had died in the spring; there was nothing for it but to be patient, and hope for news when it should please our child to think of us again. And so months passed.

One blustering October evening I stood alone in our cheerful kitchen. Hannah and Sarah were busy, and the servant was laying the parlor table for tea. My heart and thoughts were full of Effie, as I mixed the cakes, and remembered how proud she had been in old days to help me, and how often just such a cheery firelight as was shining now had shone upon her pretty face as she bent over the hearth.

There was a tap, low and timid; but strangely familiar was the sound. I opened the door. A woman stood there, drenched with the rain, wearied with the wind.

"Effie!" I cried, in amazement, and almost fear.

She threw herself into my arms.

"Aunt Ellen," she said, "take me home!"

It was a strange home-coming for the girl we had thought of as happy and prosperous. Alone, on foot—what could it mean? That night she slept in my arms.

"Well, of all freaks in the world!" ejaculated Sarah, shaking her head, as we got over the shock and surprise.

Something was very wrong—we could tell that—but what?

Effie lay sleeping on my bed. How impossible and how unreal it seemed, as we talked over the puzzle in low voices, and looked at our child, given back to us so strangely!

"I can scarcely fetch my breath again," said Hannah. "But 'tis no way for her to come. There's trouble somewhere."

"Those Carells were a bad stock," remarked Sarah, "but 'tis the woman to blame, nine cases in ten. If the trouble were his making, Effie would have written."

Sarah was always hard upon Effie for the

way she had let us drop. I could not feel certain she had hit the truth here, that the poor young thing's giddy ways and inexperience had led her into some difficulty. Well, she would tell us all in the morning, and I was glad to see her dear face again, anyway.

But the morning brought little satisfaction to our loving anxiety. She rose, and would have dressed, but her clothes were all wet and muddy; so I made her stay upstairs by the fire, wrapped in my dressing-gown. Then she seemed to recollect, and asked if the cart were going into Elford. Her things were at the railway station. Could they be called for?

She was very nice and gentle, and hoped she had not frightened us by the way she had arrived the night before. Her coming had been quite sudden, and there had not been time to write. Would Aunt Hannah give her house-room for a while? No, there never were conveyances at Elford station; she had forgotten it. A fly from the hotel? It was so stupid, but she had never thought of that. How pleasant it was to be back at Torlea! Yes, William was quite well, but he had gone away for a little while, and hoped her aunts would let her stay with them; indeed—with a confidential lowering of the voice—there were some little money difficulties. Business men met with these disagreeables sometimes. She hoped they would soon blow over.

"Blow over! Did she know?" That was what we said that evening when we read the newspaper from Elford. The bank on which William's prosperity depended had stopped payment. I am not well up in money matters, but a very few lines convinced me that Hannah and Sarah were right when they said William Carell must be ruined and have lost every sixpence he had in the world.

Furthermore, it was not at all certain—so said the paper, quoting from an influential London journal—that those in whose hands the bank management had rested were not guilty of something more than neglect. We shook our heads, and quoted the verse about those who make haste to get rich.

Effie stayed on at Torlea. William never wrote to her, and she did not seem to expect it. To my elder sisters she said little, shrinking back before them into the child she had been when we let her go from us; and yet we all felt the difference these years

had made. In dress, in speech, in manner, she belonged to us no more. Hannah would sometimes order her about as in days gone by, and then stop short as the slight figure moved with such quiet gracefulness; and the work that came as a matter of course to us seemed suddenly too rough for the delicate hands that looked so white and soft and fragile. Gentle and willing though she was, there had come a certain indefinable change in voice and bearing that marked a distance between us; and when we would fain have questioned, not even Sarah dared to attempt to break down the reserve we were forced to respect in spite of ourselves.

One evening, when I was sitting alone in the old fireside nook where the child and I had been wont to keep school in the past winters, Effie came in and, pulling out her old stool beside me, laid her head upon my lap.

"What a wild night!" she said, with a weary little sigh.

"My dear," it came out before I could help it, "do you never hear from your husband?"

"No," in a low voice. "Why should I?"

"O Effie," I cried out, unable to contain myself longer, "there is something more than a money difficulty between you and William, or you would be with him now! Though I have never married, I know that much of a wife's duty."

"Then a man should take his wife from among his equals," said Effie, slowly and bitterly, "or he may tire of a pretty face. O Aunt Ellen, I was such a child, how could you let me marry?"

"It was all well at first; he petted and made much of me, and seemed amused by my country ways. But we hadn't been long in Liverpool when he began to find fault. I didn't speak like the people he was used to be with. His wife must not do this, and must do the other. He was right, and he meant well—he wanted to train me. I see it now; but you know I was never one to take fault-finding kindly. At times I did and said the very thing I knew he thought wrong—sometimes on purpose, when I was angry; sometimes they would slip out when I got flurried through feeling different from the people around me. Anyway, we had a scene one day. I told him that he had better have chosen a lady, and that—that—I'll tell you straight out, aunt Ellen. I threw it at him that Dick had never found

fault with my ways—and— Oh, never mind! He had more patience with me than I with him. We made it up; but he never was the same to me. I told him he had promised me pretty things and a fine house, but I hadn't known fault-finding was to be sauce to them. Why had he married me? He said 'For love;' and I said there never was much to trust to in a love-match of ten days' acquaintance."

"Effie, child, how could you?"

"I think I was out of my mind to say it, but you know I never count my words when I am crossed. He took no notice; but we were cold to one another, and the heart went out of life. That was before baby died. Somehow I thought the sorrow would have brought us nearer; but it did not. He became grave and silent, away at his business all day, and thinking about that horrid bank all the evening. Then one day he told me very quietly that he had done his best, but that it could keep us no longer. We were beggars; and he was going away to try if he could make out a living somewhere. If ever he did, he would come for me; but meanwhile I had better go home. Then it came across me what the meaning was of the fuss and worry there had been lately, and strangers coming to the house, and William going out early and coming in late. Somehow I couldn't speak; it all came upon me so suddenly. I sat like a stone while he said what he had to say, and gave me money for my journey, and kissed me, and went out of the house. I didn't understand that that was good-by till Mr. Ellis—that was an old friend—came early next day and said he had promised William to see me into the train. He was very nice and kind, and explained to me about the things, and showed me what I might take. It wasn't much. There, Aunt Ellen, you know the whole, and can tell the others what you like. I'm tired of being married, and I have come home;" and she nestled down closer, like a child wearied with a day's play.

"But my dear," I said, "you are married, and you can't get rid of your obligations so. You should write to your husband. Don't you know where he is?"

"No! I won't be talked to about it, Aunt Ellen. It is a bit of my life that is over. I've come home to be Effie again."

The years went by—eight long years, with their changes and chances, but never word

nor token did they bring from William Carell. In the stormy autumn that Effie came back to Torlea End there was a great disaster at sea. An emigrant-ship was lost, with every soul on board. I noticed Effie's face as the news was read, and it grew deathly white. The paper disappeared next day, and Hannah searched for it in vain. It sometimes came into my mind—did Effie know of anybody on that ship? But I did not dare to ask, for she would bear no mention of her husband or her former life.

She lived on with us, fitting gradually into a place of her own. I was very glad of her help as the years went on and she steadied down into usefulness, for Sarah met with an accident that lamed her well-nigh altogether, and in bitter March sister Hannah caught cold and was taken from us. That was the spring of the year I am talking of now. It made a great difference in our home, for we missed Hannah much; she had been the head of everything, and a kind good sister, always.

The farm now belonged to Sarah; and, though it must come to me and Effie in our turns, there was nothing that we could see to come between it and Dick eventually. He had been brought up so to farm-life that office-work had never taken kindly to him, nor he to it; and, after trying to make way at it some two or three years, he came back to Torlea End soon after Effie's return. We really needed a man to see to much about the place, and Dick was quite the best person. His two or three years in Manchester had brushed him up a bit, and he was not at all a bad-looking young man. He had gained more self-confidence, and his manners were too straightforward and simple to be awkward now the bashfulness was gone. There was but one objection to his return that I could make, and that was Effie. However, others did not see it; for was not Effie a married, settled woman?—and there had never been any real love-making between them.

I was in the parlor when he came home that first time, and Effie with me. We heard his voice, and Sarah hastened out to meet him. Then he came in and kissed me, and shook hands with Effie—rather carelessly, it seemed, but his cheeks flushed as he touched her. She flushed up too, and I fancied appeared to avoid him both that evening and for some days after; but they fell in their old ways again, and were to-

gether like brother and sister, just as in their childish days.

It was a soft summer evening that I had just settled Sarah nicely in her chair by the open parlor window, where she could look out beyond the mignonnette and pansy borders, away over to the moor where the gathering twilight gloomed. She was able to go about the house still, but her lameness would not let her do much or stand long, and it was a hard trial to a busy active body like her to be laid by.

"Ellen," she said suddenly, "did that child ever hear aught of her husband?" We called her "child" still, though folk might think it a strange name for a tall pale woman, with the sad searching look in her deep brown eyes that eight years' uncertain widowhood had given our bonny Effie.

"No," I replied. "Often it misdoubts me whether she considers he is dead or alive."

"He is dead," affirmed Sarah. "Surely no husband living would be eight years without ever a sign!"

It was a subject we had discussed before; but Sarah was unusually positive on this night.

"He is dead," she repeated—"dead—and the child should marry again."

"Sarah!" I cried aghast. "'Tis well none think of it!"

"I fancy you want eyes at times, Ellen," was my sister's testy reply. "Have you lived in the house with Dick and Effie all these years, and never dreamt how matters might go?"

"The lad thinks naught of her but as a sister," I said.

"He thinks a deal more," replied Sarah warmly. "I've known it this long time; and now my boy's patience has waited long enough. Eight years is time, and to spare, for doubting if a man be living or dead. We are not in an age of marvels now. Dick spoke to me two days since, and I told him common-sense was Effie had been a widow this many a day—ay, since that ship went down. You know the one I mean. The child hid the paper; but I had a glimpse of the names of those aboard, and 'William Crewe' was amongst them. 'Crewe' was William Carell's second baptismal name. You know," she continued, "the farm will be Dick's one day, though it must go to Effie first. And what better settlement could there be than that they two

marry, and keep the place together in the old line and old name?"

I was silent, feeling much reason in what she said, and yet uncomfortable at the plan.

Dick spoke for himself, and Effie came to my room that night.

"Aunt Ellen, what shall I do?"

"I knew her meaning."

"My child don't make a second mistake. Do you love him?"

"'Tis not that." She stood by the window, pushing back the thick hair from her wearied, anxious brow; then she broke down all of a sudden with a low cry, sinking upon the floor, and hiding a white face against the window-sill. "Oh, Will, Will, come back to me, come back! But he cannot hear. He is dead! He is dead!"

"Dear child, do you know it?"

"Ay," she said, "this many a year! He was drowned in the ship he told me he would sail by. All were lost; and his own name that he would be called by—as he said to me—was among the number."

"You didn't speak aught of it."

"No, for I couldn't. I thought I didn't love him, didn't care; but these years of waiting have told another tale." Then she seemed to recover herself again. "What shall I do, Aunt Ellen? Is it true that I stand between Dick and the farm?"

"Let that be!" I said.

But she would have the truth.

Things were very uncomfortable for days after this. Sarah was annoyed, Effie troubled, and Dick silent. I did not make out that she had said either "Yea" or "Nay." The whole business seemed a perplexity. At last Sarah spoke her mind.

"Come out with me, Aunt Ellen, said Effie, when the storm was over. She was paler even than usual, and could scarcely speak without tears. "Come out way over the moor; I want to think; I cannot here."

She fetched my bonnet and shawl, and pulled me out away from the house, walking fast, in utter silence, as though to escape from some fancy, she knew not what. I followed, letting her take her own way without word or remonstrance, till she turned off across the moor towards Mill-dale. I had never been fond of the lone weird place with its ill tales.

"Effie, this is far enough. 'Tis lonesome at Mill-dale."

"But I like the place; it draws me to it. Come!"

She spoke no more till we were seated on the dell side, beneath the grim old building. The summer twilight was falling, but soft moonlight flooded the scene. Effie laid her head on my lap. Sarah had spoken bitter things to the child, and reminded her that she was a beggar on our charity, her own portion spent by her grandmother's folly, and she now clothed and fed from Sarah's purse, living on her, with Dick's love for a pretty pastime, to be flung aside when she was weary, or when he demanded what she had encouraged him to believe his own.

"Don't think again of her words," I said soothingly; "she was angered. It will pass over."

"I am dependent on her." That was true. "Aunt Ellen, did I encourage Dick? How could I be stiff with the man who had grown up with me as a brother? I thought he was so still."

"Don't vex yourself for it," I repeated; "it will all blow over. And you are not dependent on Sarah, while I live."

"If I loved him!" she said piteously. "I have made mischief enough, I think. Oh, to be out of the way, and let the farm go to him straight! Life is so hard for me. Why was I born?"

Dick himself came down the dell to where we sat; he had followed us and caught the last words.

"Do you think the farm is anything to me without you?" he cried. "Effie, how can you be so cruel?" Then, dropping upon the grass beside her, and trying to take her hand, which she resigned listlessly, her face hidden in my dress, he asked, "Effie dearest, what has come between us? You did not love William Carell"—I saw her wince at the name—"and he is gone; ay, dead! He must be—he is dead. These eight years are long enough of widowhood. I have waited patiently, Effie, as Jacob waited and worked for Rachel, seven full years before I would even speak to you of love, that there might be a certainty, and nothing to fall atwixt us two. Are you not free, dear, now, even if his death were not written down in black and white? But it was so."

Effie raised her head at last.

"Aunt Ellen, I will do what you tell me, and make an end;" and she spoke in a weary tone.

I looked at the two, and a vision rose before me of Torlea End once more gay with

children's voices, of Effie in a happy honored matronhood, learning day by day more of her husband's worth, and forgetting past troubles. Dick looked anxiously for my words.

"Tell her all is right to have things my way," he urged; "she is timid and over-scrupulous."

But a sudden cold faint feeling stole over me, as though an unseen hand had touched me with icy fingers. My eyes turned to the weird old building that rose above us black and shadowy against the pure pale stretch of moonlit sky. Dick's eyes followed mine, and we both saw distinctly, gazing from one of the ruined casements, the wan white face of William Carell. Our imaginations were excited; the next glance showed me that it was but a fancy caused by the glinting moon. I recovered myself; but Dick's nerves were more powerfully thrilled. He leaped up, and with a shrill wild cry dashed up the dell into the darkness of the ruin.

"Is he gone daft?" asked Effie, seeing and feeling nothing of our agitation.

I did not dare to explain, but called after him, imploring that he would not enter the mill. The fearsome old tale came back to me of those who had lost their wits by rashly intruding on haunted space—an idle story I had laughed at by day; but now, shaken and nervous, every horrible legend seemed true to my mind. Even Effie was infected at last.

"Oh, call him back! Dick, Dick!" she cried, trembling. "Let us get from this dreadful place!"

But we could not stir.

How home was reached that night I cannot tell, nor when. I only know we came back alone, after what seemed hours of vain waiting for Dick's return. Sitting crouched together, we called him when we durst, but were oftener afraid of the sound of our own voices.

Sarah treated us as idiots till she saw her boy next day. He was seated in the porch when we came down somewhat later than our wont. He was pale and haggard, with a wandering look in the blue eyes that used to be so steady and fearless. He did not talk, save in broken abrupt sentences, and seemed to avoid meeting our eyes. He would tell naught, and would give no explanation. The mere mention of the night's adventure seemed to make him turn faint and ill.

That day passed, and the next, but there was little change. Dick tried to go about the farm and do his work, but the effort it cost him was evident. Sarah almost broke her heart in trying to find out what was wrong. All the old country superstitions seemed to take hold of her. She, who had laughed to scorn such idle talk, would now fain have tried simples and charms to break the spell which she believed had been cast on her step-son by his rash entry into the haunted mill. The change was terrible. I had never believed such tales; but now we both took it as a punishment for our unbelief that this dreadful thing had happened to us. He looked wretched and scarcely spoke, but when he did we dared not cross him.

"You are a witch," he said one day to poor Effie, who offered to do him some simple service. "Your eye is an evil eye. Let me alone!"

"Ah," quoth Sarah, nodding, "'tis you have turned my boy's head."

Effie never answered. I had not thought in her young willful days to have ever seen her take harsh words so quietly, or strive so hard to serve and please those who wrongfully judged and spited her. Truly, trouble had done a good work for her; but it grieved me, this wearisome burdened life for the sister whose early days had been so sunny and lightsome. Sarah was stern and exacting with her, sparing none of the vexations and anxieties of poor Dick's ways. They came to be serious enough before long. He had the management of the farm-work, and his orders had to be obeyed. Until now his good judgment and diligence had made the place profitable; there had not been a more prosperous homestead than Torlea. Now he gave strange commands and took odd vague fancies. The men obeyed, but shook their heads. Things went wrong; the harvest-work was mismanaged. We were straitened for money that winter, a thing which had never been known at Torlea. Dick wasted much in one scheme and another which never came to good. None dared cross him or remonstrate; we gave up little luxuries in the house, and did with fewer servants. Poor Effie nearly worked herself to death, and Sarah had no mercy on her.

"Don't slave so, child," I would say sometimes; "'tis beyond reason."

"I have got the feeling this trouble is my fault," she would answer, patiently. "I

did not mean harm; let me do my best to mend it."

There was no talk now of her marrying Dick. He seemed to turn against her. I thought with the rest he was bewitched when I saw him avoid her and speak roughly. Poor Sarah would lament to me sometimes, and I did my best to help her to bear the heavy trial, for the dread was on us both that even this state of things could not last, that Dick would say or do something outrageous and have to be put under restraint, and that the whole thing would be made public.

"Folk talk as it is," said Sarah. "I don't feel as if I could bear more."

Relief came at last, and though one trouble was exchanged for another, the new burden was less intolerable. With the sharp spring winds our poor lad's health failed. It was no wonder; he went out in all weathers—would sometimes be gone the whole day in bitter frost or driving sleet; he would stand out in the drenching rain till he was wet to the skin, and no power could make him change his clothes or take common precaution. What grieved Sarah most was what we accidentally discovered, that in many of his long absences he was not about the farm at all, but wandering off to Mill-dale—always to Mill-dale. He would spend hours in the darksome place, and always on his return was there a worse fit of depression and temper.

At last he fell ill. We nursed him through a terrible attack of pleurisy, the three of us. Effie and I, indeed, had most of the work, for Sarah's lameness prevented her from taking any active part, and the worry and care of the last few months had told upon her. She was quite unfit for night-watching; Effie and I managed that between us. Strangely enough, as his bodily health failed, the poor lad's mind seemed to recover.

One night Effie had taken my place by the bedside, and I was lying on a couch made up in the corner, trying to sleep. I heard him ask for a drink, and she gave it.

"'Tis a long, heavy night," he said.

"I wish I could do aught to shorten or lighten it," she answered. "Shall I read?"

He signed "Yes," and lay watching and listening to the soft, sweet voice, uttering the good words.

"Effie," he said suddenly, "have I been strange lately?"

"Your illness has been hanging over you some time," she answered guardedly.

He smiled—we had not seen him smile for months.

"Am I dying?"

"I hope not, Dick." She could not say more, for the doctor had told us that morning there was bare hope and nothing else.

"Effie, don't you know I loved you?"

"Yes, dear Dick; we won't talk of it now."

"Yes, we will. Do you love me, Effie—well enough, I mean, to forgive me?"

"Surely, surely; but there is nothing to forgive. Try not to talk, Dick."

"Suppose there was?" he persisted.

"Effie, will you promise to tell me when I am near death—not so near but that I can talk a little, and think and remember? I have something to tell you; but I cannot until I am so near death that I can make sure of being forgiven." He was getting excited, and she tried to quiet him.

"I could forgive you anything. Don't talk now, dear. You know I love you. Lie still and get well, and we will have happy days and plenty."

"Well!" he cried, eagerly. "You love me well enough to marry me, Effie?"

She hesitated, and then said deliberately:—

"I will marry you, if you like, Dick."

His days of helplessness had brought him nearer her heart than days of health; but yet the very tone of her words revealed the effort with which she brought herself to the resolve.

"No, dear," he said, in such a gentle tone that it made my heart leap to hear our lad speak so once more, "I shall never ask you that; don't be afraid—not even if I live, Effie. Only kiss me just once."

She stooped over him; but, even as she did so, he turned away, as though from sudden recollection, crying:—

"No, no; I had forgotten! Oh, for one moment might I not forget?"

I rose hastily, and we quieted him as best we could; but he was worse next day, and for weeks afterwards his life could scarcely be reckoned even for a hope.

The warmer weather brought some improvement. In the milder days of April he was up and able to go about a little. The doctor advised change as his best chance, though he warned us not to make certain that the increase of strength would last. It

was too fitful; something seemed to keep him back and take away all real rallying power. We were advised to try sea air.

The move was a great business. I had never left Torleacombe in my life before, and Effie was well-nigh as helpless. What with choosing the place to go to, and finding people to see to matters while we were gone, and getting lodgings, and making arrangements for traveling, our heads were nigh dazed; and we were right glad to find ourselves safely settled in a tiny cottage, close to the beach, in the quiet little village of Darcliff Point. Ah me, when I think what a heavy heart I had during the first night there—Dick going from us slowly, Sarah failing under the load of sorrow and care, Effie with her blighted life and no bright days in store! The world seemed dark enough. I little knew how quickly all would be changed to joy. It was very faithless of me; I never thought it possible we could see happiness again.

The change of scene and life seemed at first to do Dick good. He was much in the open air, down on the beach with Effie; they were like two children again in their marvel and delight over the seaside wonders. But there was no real improvement. He was still feverish and sleepless; and, after the first novelty wore off, the old languor and depression returned.

Then came a spell of rough wild weather. The waves gathered themselves up with white waving crests, and rolled over in angry foam, rushing up the beach till I sometimes thought they had a mind to swallow up our little cottage in their hungry haste. For two days we were kept altogether in the house by the weather.

One morning, before the light had fairly dawned, there was a cry through the village. A ship was in distress just off the Point. We heard the people hastening to the spot, and, moved by the general impulse, Effie and I rose and dressed; we could not sleep—we must be out and gazing too. Dick was at the door before us. Like ourselves, he could not rest; but it was no fit time for him to be out. We tried our utmost to keep him at home, but in vain. Go he would, and we could but accompany him.

I trust I shall never view such a scene again. In the dawning light we could just make out the vessel, and through the noise of the roaring wind and the driving foam we sometimes fancied we could hear the cry

for help. There was no lifeboat, and nothing could be done. The village-folks said it was impossible to get a rope to her unless she drifted nearer. We could but stand and watch in miserable helplessness. It did not last very long; in less than half an hour all was over. There was a strong blast, a sudden squall that blinded our anxious eyes, a crash, and a great cry. When we looked again, there was nothing to be seen, and we heard no more. Still the people lingered. There was just a chance, they said, that some of the poor creatures might be washed ashore; and would not leave the beach while a chance remained. The perils they braved themselves had made them tender-hearted as to others' needs.

We stayed too; no persuasion could get Dick away—indeed we were all too excited to be prudent. The full day had dawned, and the eastern clouds were rosy with the promise of sunrise. Gray, desolated, pitiless, triumphant, the sea tossed on; the huge waves upreared themselves and rolled over on the beach. A dark object was seen amongst the surf. What was it? A man—a man clinging to a broken spar! The tide carried him towards us, then with cruel mockery all but cast him on the shore, only to drag the helpless form back with the strong undertow.

The men tried to save him, but it was perilous work; the strongest and bravest of them seemed but a toy thrust aside by the mighty forces of nature. They made a line as far out as they dared. The sea once more tendered its prey just beyond their grasp. No! Who was it who, rushing forward, disregarding his life, had plunged into the boiling, seething foam? A cry rose from the beach.

“He is lost! Oh, Dick, Dick!”

What sudden access of strength had by some miracle been granted him?

Effie sank down, pressing her hand over her eyes; but I gazed on, fascinated. Ah, thank Heavens! The men had seized him, and, as he was drawn back to shore, a louder cry, a louder cheer, rang through the air; for in his grasp he held the spar with its clinging living burden—a living burden, though consciousness for a while had departed.

He and Dick lay side by side, while the fishermen praised the pluck and daring of our poor fainting lad. We hastened to him; but when I, kneeling by his side, glanced

round for Effie, I saw that she had fallen, white and gasping for breath, beside the other motionless form, which was that of William Carell. Like a good omen, the newly-risen sun shed around his purest, earliest rays. Cliff, tossing water, earth, sky, and sea, all glowed and sparkled in the glittering light. The clouds of night were gone.

In the evening of that day we sat together at the cottage window. Sarah had been helped up-stairs to take her place by Dick's bedside; some one else had been sitting with him for the last hour, but he was coming down-stairs to us now, leaving our lad to rest. The color wavered and flushed in Effie's cheeks. How young and bright she looked once more—like a girl of nineteen awaiting her lover, rather than a sorrow-taught woman in her nine-and-twentieth! A tall, bronzed, bearded man entered and went straight up to her.

“Effie, you are my wife still, faithful through all these years! Forgive me that I should have doubted you!”

The tearful eyes were raised in questioning wonder, and the trembling hands made a slight motion towards him.

“Dick has asked me to tell you all—his share as well as mine. No, Aunt Ellen, do not go; let us have an end of mistakes and misunderstandings.”

“When I left you, Effie, nearly nine years ago, it was under the impression that our hasty marriage had been a bitter mistake—that you, poor child, overcome by my self-willed passion and your grandmother's ambition, had married me for what I could give you of riches and ease, while your heart was with your own folks and your cousin Dick. When my money went, I felt as though I had deceived you, seeing I could no longer give you these things; and I resolved that my wife should return to her people, while I in a new land tried to win back what I had lost. If our marriage could be but a bargain, I would at least fulfill my share. So I went out under a feigned name, knowing that in so doing I should have to bear my share of the public censure that rightly fell on some of my partners. I declare to you, Effie, there is no real stain on my name about that miserable bank business; I did my best. The ship in which I should have sailed was lost; but I was not in her. By rights you should have known; but I was miserable at the failure of my happiness,

and resolved you should see and hear nothing of your husband till he could bid you return to a home as luxurious as the one for which I believed you had married me. I went to Australia, toiled and strove. Money is easier lost than won. In those lonely laborious days I learnt how near you were to my heart. At last my ambition was attained, and I returned home. But my courage failed me as I drew near Torlea; and I turned aside to the old mill, with some fancy that you might be there, as on the day that I first saw you—you and your aunt—and we would make it up together in the place where we first met. The place was desolate. I wandered into the old mill and fell asleep. When I awoke, the moon was up, and by its light I saw you with your hand in Dick's. How different from the meeting I had pictured! My heart stood still; I had never thought of this result from the long years of my silence and pride. Then Dick rushed into the ruined chamber where I stood. We grappled. I think either would have killed the other then, and thought the deed no harm.

"My wife!" I cried.

"She is my wife!" he said. "Ghost, demon, with your mocking face, what business have you here?"

"My strength gave way as I heard him call you 'wife.' We stood where the timbers had rotted away in the disused flooring. There was a broken space, beneath which gurgled the black mill-stream. I stepped back powerless, and fell. There was a splash, as a large piece of the unsafe wood came with me in my fall; but I did not reach the water, but lay stunned amongst the beams and framework of the mill. When I came to myself, the sun was shining brightly; but a very midnight of despair and misery was in my soul. Getting myself out of the mill as best I could, I went to London, feeling that there was not in me self-control for an Enoch Arden, and that it would be best to return to Australia as fast as possible. What good was my money to me now? I was rather glad to find that the pocket-book which contained most of my wealth was gone; probably in my fall it dropped with the wood into the mill-stream. I had not sufficient left for my passage out till remittances could come from Australia.

It was this that kept me in England till now."

Effie could not speak for tears. He went on.

"How mercifully are all these things ordered for us! That I should be spared for this, dear Effie—to see whose face my life has been given back to me from the cruel sea! Some special instinct gave poor Dick the knowledge that the man he thought he had destroyed was near him to be saved, some special mercy gave him power to do it. Have we not been brought together again for good? Effie, will you forgive the pain my pride and folly cost you? Effie, dearest, will you come to me?"

As she moved towards him he caught her in his arms. It was indeed their true wedding day!

The shipwreck that had so mysteriously united our child to her husband proved not so terrible as had at first been feared. Few lives were lost, for most of the crew and passengers had taken to the boats. William was one of those who stayed behind when these were full, and the greater number of those with him were washed ashore as he had been. Still there was enough of death and sadness, of quiet funerals in the little village churchyard, to calm our joy and direct our hearts into thankfulness for the mercies with which our troubles were crowned.

Sarah and I live with Dick at Torlea End. The weight of misery is gone from our lad's heart and conscience. Happiness has done for him what medicine could not have done. He is strong and well in mind and body.

William and Effie are in Australia. He could not give her the riches he had hoped to give; but sufficient was left him to make them comfortable on a good farm, and to enable Effie to resign all claim on Torlea. Dick tried to have it otherwise; but the others prevailed. However, it will not make much difference, for our lad is not likely to marry, and the farm is sure to fall eventually to the little namesake of whom Effie writes such grand accounts, Richard Buzzacott Carell. Our Effie is now a happy woman.

PARTED.

BY MYRA DOUGLASS.

STILL of the world, but dead to me;
Father of heaven, oh, can it be?
And I no more to touch the hand
That clasped my own as loving band;
Never again to mark the eye
With love so deep to mine reply;
To hear her voice, ah, nevermore,
That hope and trust could all restore;
But coldly sundered—cruel—wide—
As if we one, or both had died!

Dead to me, tho' oft I trace,
In daily walk that well-known face,
Where once for me affection beamed,
When life and duties joyful seemed;
But now so stern, so grim and cold,
How changed from him I knew of old!
Who once for me held every charm,
Whose love could shield from worldly harm,
And lightest word could thrill my heart,
Till earth of Eden seemed a part.

St. Louis, 1888.

Dead to me, tho' still alive,
While love for him doth still survive;
And oft in slumber do I see
The face I loved still dear to me.
I reach my arms,—“Forgive, forgive!
Within my heart thou still dost live!”
While tears flow down my face like rain,
Wrung from my soul by torturing pain.
But, ah! I wake—to misery,
To find that thou art dead to me.

Within the world, but dead to me!
Could Fate ordain such cold decree
For one whose only fault was trust—
And abnegation in the dust?
Long years may mark my lonely path,
And dark the clouds of Fortune's wrath
May frown, where joy was once a guest,
Where angels smiled as love's bequest;
But sorrow's gloom my lot shall be,
If thou fore'er art dead to me.

THANKSGIVING AT MARKHAM HOUSE.

BY BLANCHE SHAW.

“**M**ARY, this is folly; nay, worse than folly; it is a blind infatuation with an unworthy fancy.”

The girl looked up, startled, and the man continued, “Yes, Mary, in spite of your quiet patience, I have guessed your secret all these years, and I have borne with you, hoping that time would tear the veil from your eyes, and show him to you in his true light. But I have hoped in vain. You still obstinately hug your delusion to your heart, and further forbearance on my part would be weakness. My child, think what you are doing. Look at my gray hairs and failing strength. In the course of nature it is not probable that I shall be with you many more years. And your youth is passing, too, Mary, and taking with it the power to bear unhurt the cold indifference of the world. You cannot be happy alone, Mary; your nature is too gentle for it. You need a strong, loving hand to help you over the rough spots of life. Without it you would shrink and wither, and suffer a thousand deaths before it came at last to rest you. Think of this, Mary. Think how I have

loved you; think of my agony in leaving you to such a fate. Think of all, and do not let the memory of a base scoundrel blast your happiness forever.”

The speaker, a kindly-looking, gray-haired man, bent over the woman, and laid his hand upon her bowed head. She did not speak, and after a moment he continued:—

“Mark Eldon is a true, honest man. He loves you with all the strength of his nature. Your happiness will be his first and dearest care, and knowing it in his keeping I could die happy. O Mary, do not let that base miscreant stab me with a double-edged sword. Do not let him break your heart, as well as disgrace my name forever. Think of his ingratitude, his black”——

The girl lifted her head hastily.

“Stop! stop! in pity's name! If you can say those words I cannot hear them. O my dear guardian, how can it be that you, so kind and good to every one, are so harsh and cruel to him! Think how long ago it was. Think of those long years of remorse and probable suffering. Think of the time he played, a happy babe, at your knees; and

if you cannot forgive him, at least think kindly."

She clasped his hand in both of hers, and looked appealingly at him; but his brow only grew dark, and he shut his teeth tightly, as he replied:—

"Why should I think of him, when every thought but makes me breathe a fresh curse upon him, undutiful son, dishonest man, and false lover! Think of him! My God, if I could but forget him, and the stain he has put upon me!"

He clenched his hands and paced the floor rapidly a few moments, and then stopping by her again, said, huskily:—

"Pardon my vehemence, Mary; I should not have given vent to my feelings, but an ever-smouldering flame will sometimes burst out. But enough of it! Ten years have elapsed since Albert Markham's name has passed my lips, and should I live fifty more, I swear it shall never pass them again. I renew my curse, and cast him off afresh, black-hearted traitor that he is! May he live a vagabond upon the earth, and may he suffer but a hundredth part of the agony he has inflicted upon me! No! no!" as Mary made an effort to speak, "I will hear no word for him. He is as if he had never lived. I blot him out forever! And now, Mary, daughter of my heart, I make a last appeal to you. Will you inflict another stab upon my wounded heart, and rob my last days of my only light? Oh no, my child, you will not! Let me tell Mark Eldon you will be his wife, and to-morrow will indeed be a happy Thanksgiving to us all."

The pallor on Mary's face grew marble-like, as, rising, she laid her hand on Mr. Markham's arm, and said:—

"Dear guardian, I will be Mark Eldon's wife." And before he could speak, she left the room.

And now I must ask you to go back with me for a few moments to some things that happened many years ago, and which will furnish a key to the above scene.

Henry Markham was left a widower early in life with one son, Albert, who in his infancy developed a precocity of mind and brightness of disposition that made him the pet and tyrant of all about him. By the time his childhood was passed he was fully convinced that the earth was made especially for him to live upon, and that it was entirely beneath his dignity to acknowledge the authority of any one, his father included.

Things progressed in this way till he reached his twentieth year, and had become in every respect a very fast young man, when Mary Craige, an orphan daughter of an old friend of Mr. Markham, became a member of their family. Mary was just sixteen, and as pure and noble by nature as she was fair in person. Albert was at once charmed by her, and the old story was acted over again, as it will be to the end of time—they loved each other. For a time Albert abandoned his dissolute habits, and his fond, unhappy father began to hope that the nobler part of his nature would rise above the weeds that overshadowed it, and assert itself master in the end. Vain hope! The fetters of vice, when once firmly fastened, cannot be thrown off at will. Albert would listen with penitent sorrow to Mary's reproaches, and promise amendment, only at the first temptation to fall into the same vices again. But through all her love never faltered, and soon constituted the only shield between him and his father, whose forbearance had almost reached its limit.

Thus things went on till Mary reached her nineteenth year, just ten years before our story opens, when the old time-honored firm of Markham & Co. was brought to the brink of ruin by a heavy defalcation, and the crime lay between Mark Eldon, their confidential clerk, and Albert Markham. The world stood aghast—so stunned that it knew not upon which to cast the odium. But it was soon decided; Mark Eldon came forward and demanded the severest examination, and Albert Markham fled without a word of defence, or leaving a clew by which to trace him.

These were fearful days in the old town; so fearful that gossips spoke with bated breath, and people crossed over to the other side when Mr. Markham, with the air of a stricken Roman, passed by. And Mary, how did she stand the blow? As women of her nature always do—patiently, silently, with a resignation that was more pathetic than the wildest grief. The day after Albert's flight, Mr. Markham called her to him and told her that he cast him off forever, and forbade her ever to mention his name. Mary bowed in obedience to his command; and never, till the evening our story opens, had the subject been mentioned between them.

Thanksgiving logs were mingling their ruddy glare with the sunbeams over the

snow when Mary greeted her guardian at breakfast.

"God bless you, my child!" said he, kissing her brow. "This is a true Thanksgiving to me, and may we have many more as bright. Mark called last evening after you left me to say that the young people are to have a grand sleighing party to-day, and to ask you to go with him. I ventured to promise for you, and also asked him to come back here to supper, and to have a merry time in the evening. "Do you like it, my dear?"

Mary's heart swelled almost to choking. The last time gayety was in the Markham House was in one of Albert's repentant moods, when he had been the light and life of all. But she smothered her sigh, and said she was pleased; and he continued:—

"Mark will call this morning for his answer. Thank God, my child, that you have been able to make a noble man happy."

Mary bent over her plate in silence, and before Mr. Markham could say more, the door opened and the object of their conversation entered. Mark Eldon was a man who could be described by one word—correct. His books when offered at the time of the trouble were perfectly correct. The regret he expressed for Albert's offence was correct. His after devotion to Mr. Markham was correct to a word. The persistent patience with which he had sued for Mary's hand was correct, and the manner in which he stood looking at her from his cold brown eyes was correct in the extreme.

"Good-morning, Mr. Markham," said he, addressing himself to him first. "I hope I am not untimely."

"Not at all, Mark. I was just telling Mary of our plans for the day."

"And she approves?" he asked, with the correct amount of eagerness. Mary raised her eyes from her plate, and though she was as white as the china, she extended her hand and said, with a smile:—

"I am delighted, Mr. Eldon; nothing could be more charming."

"You are too kind," and he pressed a proper kiss upon her hand. Mary drew it away with a shudder she could not suppress, and Mark seating himself at the table, the meal proceeded with outward cheerfulness.

The morning passed. The Thanksgiving turkey was eaten, and Mary stood waiting by her wrappings for the jingle of Mark's sleighbells.

By a fortunate combination of circumstances she had not been alone with him since her conversation with Mr. Markham, and she now awaited him with that strange mixture of eagerness and dread with which we always meet the tragic moments of our lives. At last the bells sounded. She seized her furs with nervous haste, and a bright red burned in her cheeks. Mr. Markham opened the door.

"Most ready, Mary? Mark says wrap up warm, for it is very cold." Then, seeing her brilliant cheeks and eyes, "Why, child, how bright and happy you look! Mark will be dazzled quite out of his senses, poor fellow."

Mary smiled her answer, and following him out to the sleigh, was muffled up in the robes beside her lover. Away they went over the crisp, white snow, Mark sitting correctly erect, and holding the reins at the proper angle, and Mary trying not to shrink away to the extreme edge of her seat. The party was to meet at a house about a mile distant from Markham, and they had ridden about half the distance in silence, when Mark, throwing himself a little out of the perpendicular in Mary's direction, said:—

"Miss Mary, I wish to say a few words to you upon a subject deeply interesting to me, and which I dare to hope is not entirely indifferent to you."

He paused, and Mary unmistakably shrank away without reply, at which a look, half triumph, half pain, came into his face; for, spite of his propriety, Mark Eldon had a heart, and Mary filled all of it that he could spare from himself. The silence lasted a moment, then he continued:—

"Mr. Markham has been good enough to tell you of my feelings, which could have been no secret, and it only remains for me to say myself that I love you, and ask you to be my wife."

He actually leaned over her as he said this, and his eyes were really tender. Poor Mary had reached the extreme limit of her seat, and could only sit and feel his breath upon her cheek, till she found voice to say:—

"Mr. Eldon, my guardian informed me of the honor you would do me, and I presume before this he has told you my answer. I will be your wife. I cannot say I love you; but as my guardian's trusted friend, I respect you, and if this will satisfy you, I will do my duty by you as faithfully as lies in my power."

They were nearing the meeting place, and as Mary ceased speaking the jingle of bells and merry laughter fell on their ears. Mark bent over and kissed her quickly, and by the time he had assumed his proper position, they were in the midst of the laughing, merry party. There was the usual greeting, confusion, and good-natured discussion, and then the whole party dashed away as merrily as though care were a thing unknown. The destination of the party was a place about ten miles distant, where they were to warm themselves and return to Markham House in time for supper and the evening's gayety.

They reached the place safely, the reeking horses had cooled off in their blankets, the blooming girls had deepened their roses by the glowing stove over hot coffee, and stood waiting in their mufflers to begin their homeward journey. One by one they were snugly packed into their sleighs by anxious swains, and the party started away again over the snow, now dabbled here and there by the crimson stains of the setting sun. Mary and Mark were about the middle of the train. They had traveled nearly a mile when one of the rear sleighs suddenly broke out of line, and endeavored to pass them, striking, as it did so, the back of their sleigh, and nearly overturning it. Mark instantly passed the reins to one hand, and seized Mary with the other, at the same time throwing his weight on the opposite side of the sleigh and righting it. It was but the work of a moment, but that moment was too long. The horse, a very spirited animal, sprang forward as soon as he felt the reins loosened, and before Mark could get him in hand again he had taken the bit, and was plunging away at a mad rate. Without a word or a cry Mary clung to her seat, and Mark struggled bravely with the horse; but in vain; he could no more control him than the wind. On, on they went, till suddenly, striking a concealed stone, the sleigh turned over, throwing Mary out on the snow, but Mark, being entangled with the robes and reins, was dragged on with the vehicle. On, on, still faster, till suddenly, above the clash of the bells, a shrill whistle rang out, curdling the very air. But a few yards ahead lay the railroad, and down it came thundering an express train, at a rate that would catch and grind both horse and man to atoms, unless the hand of Providence itself stopped them before they reached it. On dashed the horse. On, on, came the

iron monster, while cries of horror rose from the sleighs following. Nearer, nearer! A moment more, and Mark Eldon would be in eternity, when like a flash a man sprang from the shadow of a bush and seized the flying horse by the bridle. The animal reared and plunged, dragging the man from his feet, but he clung to him with an iron grip, and forced him back till the train went thundering by. The other sleighs soon came up. The horse was secured, and Mark taken from the ruins. Mary had been picked up, and found but slightly hurt; but Mark presented a sorry sight, cut and bleeding, and wholly insensible. Fortunately a house was near; they carried him to it, and in a short time he revived. He looked vacantly about him for a moment, and then seeing the physician at his side, he motioned him to lean near him. He did so, and in an eager whisper, Mark said:—

"Am I badly hurt? Will I die?"

"Of course not, my dear fellow," replied the doctor, with the professional cheerfulness the occasion demanded. "You will be all right in a few days."

But Mark looked sternly at him.

"This is no time for jesting, doctor; tell me truly, as you expect one day to die."

The doctor's face grew grave.

"I cannot say, Eldon; you are hurt badly. You may recover, and a few hours may end all."

A groan burst from Mark, and he closed his eyes. A moment and he opened them, and looking eagerly around, said:—

"Mary! Where is she? Is she hurt?"

Mary came to the bedside and took his hand. His eyes lighted as he looked at her, and turning again to the doctor, he asked, appealingly:—

"Am I so very bad?"

The doctor shook his head. He looked again at Mary, and his face worked as though moved by a fearful struggle. The doctor held a stimulant to his lips, and then, as though possessed of sudden strength, he half rose, and still holding Mary by the hand, said, clearly:—

"Listen to me, all, for I fear my end is near, and I cannot carry to my grave the weight of the crime that has borne me down for years. Hear me now. On my soul, as a dying man, I speak truth. Albert Markham is an innocent man. I did the deed!"

He paused a moment, and then catching his breath, continued:—

"I hated him and loved her, and knew that while he was in my path I could not win her. I determined to destroy him, and I did. Ha! what is that?" and he fell back fainting, as pushing back the crowd, there stood at his pillow the man who had saved him—Albert Markham!

A deathlike silence reigned a moment, and then Albert Markham, turning to the crowd, said, slowly:—

"You heard him! He spoke truly. He did the deed. I knew it, but he had done his work so skillfully that I was powerless to prove it; and what weight would my testimony have beside his! I was ruined, and not daring to face my fate, I fled. For ten long years I have been a homeless wanderer, bitterly repenting the sins of my youth in remorse and suffering. Many a night have I slept with no shelter but the heavens, my last thought being a prayer to open my eyes no more on earth. But death comes not to such wretches as I. A few months ago a wild homesickness seized me, and urged by a power I could not resist, I turned my feet this way, hoping that outside in my dark desolation I might catch the glow of their Thanksgiving fire, and hear the echo of their mirth. God knows I hoped for nothing more! Can it be that this is real—no dream?"

And Albert Markham bowed his head in his fingers and sobbed like a boy, till soft fingers touched him, and a sweet voice said:—

"Real, dear Albert, as the love that waits to welcome you home again. Come away

from here. We can do no good, and think how long your father's heart has ached!" and leading him like a child, they went out together, and whirled away over the starlit snow to Markham House. The lights were flashing brightly from every window, and at the sound of their bells the door opened, and Mr. Markham appeared in it, the warm glow within falling like a halo over his gray hair. A look of surprise came over his face when he saw the single sleigh containing Mary and a stranger; but before he could speak, she sprang from it, and laying her hands upon his shoulders, said:—

"By God's goodness, dear guardian, I have brought you a joyous Thanksgiving. Albert home again, with name unsullied as your own." And he looked up, to see his son standing, with bowed head, before him.

There was no ball in Markham House that night, but the lamps burned long and bright, and the hearts within beat lighter than ever dancers' feet to music. There was one shade upon their happiness—Mark's injury, and the pain that faith betrayed ever gives. But even this was soon wiped away. A late messenger brought word that his injuries were not so serious, and that he would recover. And he did; and by a life of unfeigned faithfulness atoned for his past crime.

Mary and Albert were soon married, and the old house is now bright with childish faces, which are never so bright and happy as when they gather around grandfather on Thanksgiving Day.

AN AUTUMN LYRIC.

BY T. J. CHAMBERS.

○ SOFT wind, from the sunny south,
Your voice is like the mateless dove's!
Can the sad whisper of your mouth
Restore the flowers that childhood loves?

When last your sweet breath fanned the trees
The leaves were green as tropic glen;
But, ah! a blast from Arctic seas
Has chilled their generous blood since then.

The fragrant flowers, caressed by you,
When skies were bright and fields were fair,

Have drooped beneath the deadly dew
That kissed them from the icy air.

In some fair land of date and palm,
With clime of never-ending spring,
And air forever filled with balm,
Perhaps our song-birds blithely sing.

Oh, would that we had wings, to fly
To some green isle in southern sea,
When storm-clouds fill the wintry sky,
And snowdrifts cover vale and lea!

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN., 1888.

THE RINGDOVE MUTINY.

BY I. P. MILLER.

"**M**R. MATE, can you give us a job, sir? I'm hard up—ain't got no money, nor ate anythin' since yesterday mornin'. If I don't get some work I'll have to starve, sir—or steal. Can't you give me a day's work, sir?"

Such was the speech addressed to me by a man who came up the accommodation ladder which led from the wharf in Sandridge, Australia, to the gangway of the good barque Ringdove, whereof I was mate, having joined in that capacity but a few days before.

We were putting out a cargo of flour, the barque being engaged in regular trade between Chili, South America, and her majesty's colonies in Australia. The voyage before this one had taken her into Tasmania, where she had shipped a new crew—the one now in the vessel; and a hard-looking lot they were, as ever I had the misfortune to sail with. The last mate whose place I had taken, was a quiet, kindly man, with no great energy; and he had told me before I joined the barque, that he left solely on account of the crew, who were inveterate skulkers, thieves and bullies, and always fighting among themselves, except when united to make combined war on their "natural enemies, the after-guard." But I wanted a berth, and the captain and I were mutually pleased with each other, so I shipped as chief officer; I had compelled obedience from bad crews before, and did not doubt but that prompt determination and energy would enable me to get along with these fellows.

At the time the stranger saluted me with his appeal for a job, I was discharging cargo short-handed, five of the sailors having got in a drunken row the previous evening with some citizens on shore, and got locked up to pay for their pains, the captain refusing to pay their fines. I looked at the man, a big, and certainly not over handsome fellow, with a close-cropped head of bristly black hair, a smooth face (or, at least, it would have been smooth but for a beard of two days' growth), a slight stoop in his shoulders, and eyes that looked everywhere but at mine.

"Well, my man," said I, "I want a hand or two; are you a sailor-man? Have you ever been used to working cargo?"

The sullen, dogged look of obstinate hopelessness on the man's face instantly gave way to an expression of eager hope. He had evidently fully expected a flat denial to his request.

"Yes, sir; I am a sailor, and used to cargo work, or any other work aboard ship," he replied.

"Very well, take off your coat and go below; get that flour from the run into the square of the main hatch. But hold on. You say you haven't had any breakfast?"

"Not a bite since yesterday morning, sir."

"Then go to the cook and get something; a hungry man can't do a man's work. Cook," I called out, to that important official, "give this man some grub."

The man muttered a "thank you, sir," and went forward. In a short time he returned, went into the hold, and worked well until noon. When he came up with the rest of the men, I told him to get his dinner with the crew, which he did, the whole of them eating on the topgallant-fo'castle, under the shade of the awning.

As I was walking the quarter-deck after my dinner, smoking a cigar, and waiting for two bells to strike, to turn the men to again, a police officer came on board, and walking up to me, touched his hat and inquired:—

"Is that man with the red belt on, there for'ard, one of your crew, sir?"

"No," said I "he's working by the day. Why?"

"Do you know who he is, sir?"

"No; who is he, anyway?"

"That man is a convict—Nick Bush, he calls himself—one of the worst characters in the colonies. He was only discharged from the hulks yesterday morning—been in four years, for a robbery with violence."

"Well he can't steal much here, at all events; and if he wants to work I'm willing he should have work to do. It won't make him an honest man to write 'thief' on his back. I'm obliged to you, officer, for your warning."

He then went ashore, after informing me that the mate of another ship had turned the convict ashore that morning, after setting him to work, on being told who and what he was by my informant.

Two bells struck, and I gave the order to recommence work. As the men came along to the waist and descended to the hold, I noticed that my new workman lingered till the last, and brought his jacket on his arm. As he approached me, he stopped; and I observed on his features the same look of sullen dreariness he had worn when he first came on board. He evidently expected to be again turned on shore, and was prepared to be greeted with sneers, if not with abuse. But I had no intention of meddling with the man's past career; if he was intending to live without crime for the future, I, at least, would not assist in hounding him back to his former evil courses; and the following colloquy ensued:—

"What's your name, my man?"

"Bush, sir."

"Well, Bush, why don't you turn to with the rest? Got tired of it in two hours?"

"No sir; but—didn't that policeman tell you anything about me, sir—that I was a con?"

"There, there; that'll do. I don't want to know anything about what you've done, or haven't done. Are you going to work any more?"

"Then you ain't going to turn me ashore, sir?" he asked, for the first time looking me full in the eyes, with an expression of pleading, eager anxiety that would have been ludicrous for such a big powerful man, had it not been really painful to regard.

"Turn you ashore? No. Look here, Bush, I never in my life kicked a dog because he was down. I don't care what you've been—never mind what others say—it'll be time enough for you to go ashore when I tell you to go. Go to work again; you can get your grub aboard the vessel while you're at work aboard, and sleep in the fo'castle. If you've a mind to work you shall have it."

"Thank you, sir; I do want work; and I may have a chance to pay you back for this some day, sir," said Bush, as he disappeared down the hatchway.

The next day we finished discharging the cargo; and four of the five rascals who had been locked up were brought on board by the police, one of them, who had used a knife in the row, being detained to stand a

trial for a deadly assault. As we were in a hurry to get to sea, another man had to be shipped at once; and the captain, on my recommendation, immediately enrolled Nick Bush as one of the barque's crew. The fellow seemed anxious to give satisfaction, and was a quick strong man and a good seaman; and I had no doubt would prove a valuable man.

We sailed first to Newcastle, New South Wales, and took in a cargo of coal. From thence we went to Talcahuana, in Chili, where we disposed of our coal to good advantage, to a steamship company, getting seven hundred pound sterling for the cargo, in gold. A short run took us to Valparaiso, where we received a cargo of flour on consignment, for merchants in Sydney, New South Wales; and we set sail on our return trip with every prospect of keeping up the Ringdove's name as a "lucky craft." I must now speak of the other officers.

Our captain was an elderly man, whose life had been mostly spent on the ocean. He was kind, and generally silent in his habits; but there was a look about his mouth and eyes that said plainly enough that he was a dangerous man to trifle with.

The second-mate was rather a hard case. He was a stout young fellow, and a very fair seaman; but he had been "brought up in packets," and was a genuine "packet second-mate," and thought no more of knocking a man down with a handspike than he did of smoking a pipe of tobacco. I had been obliged on several occasions to interfere on behalf of some of the seamen, whom he was brutally abusing; on one occasion he told me that he "headed his own watch, and would do it, too." I merely replied that if he was officer of the starboard watch, I was mate of the ship; and that every man in her had got to obey my orders, except the captain; on which our quarrel ended.

Bush, my convict protege, had shown himself a good man; and the captain, who had at first been displeased when I told him the new man was a "lay," (as convicts are called in that part of the world) had come to regard him very favorably.

For ten days after leaving Valparaiso, all went well; at the end of that time Captain Thompson fell sick. At first he experienced merely a slight nausea and headache; but he grew worse rapidly, and on the fourth day of his illness, as I was sitting by his cot,

wiping the moisture from his forehead, he said:—

"Mr. Ritchie, will you look round a bit, and make sure we are not overheard?"

I wondered what was coming, but did as he requested; no one was near.

"Now, Mr. Ritchie, keep close to me, and we'll whisper. Do you know of what I am dying?"

"Captain Thompson, I hope you're not dying—don't think you are. This thirst and burning sensation you complain of is only a kind of a fever, sir; keep a stiff upper lip, sir; and you'll weather it, yet," said I, encouragingly.

"No, Ritchie," said he, smiling calmly; "I've done my work. I'm dying—and with only a fever, as you say. But have you no suspicions as to what gave me the fever?"

"No, sir."

"Then listen, but don't start, or say anything out aloud. I'm poisoned!"

"Good God, sir! what makes you have that horrible thought?"

"'Tis a certainty, Mr. Ritchie. I know that I drank poison in a cup of coffee that was on a swinging tray, the evening I was taken down. And I'm about done for now—sha'n't hold out much longer. Listen—come closer—I have been poisoned purposely, I believe by either the steward or second-mate. Don't trust that man, Mr. Ritchie. I'm afraid you'll have your hands full after I'm gone; for the crew know about our having the money on board. Confounded folly in me not to send it over by mail, in a draft, instead of bringing it in the barque; and I much fear that poisoning me is but part of the plan to take the barque. There's my will in that desk; all I have goes to my wife and boy. Ritchie, I have read you, and I know I can trust you; what one man can do to take the vessel in safe you will do. But look out, don't trust anybody, keep your pistols handy, and use 'em without hesitation, if need be. Look out for that second-mate; shoot him down like a dog if you see the least reason, for plucky action is your only chance; and if you must trust anybody, trust that convict, Bush."

"Did you call me, Mr. Ritchie?" said the steward, poking his ugly head into the stateroom.

"No," said I; and he disappeared.

Whispering once more in my ear, the captain continued:—

"That scoundrel is watching. Don't let any of 'em see you're on the lookout. Get your pistols, Mr. Ritchie, and here, take my revolver; 'tis a splendid weapon, and never misses. Put that water-jug where I can reach it, and go on deck, to see how things are going on."

All seemed quiet on deck, and in about half an hour I returned to the captain's room. He was dead, and the frightful expression on his honest, manly face, and marks of discoloration on his neck, told me that the brave, kind-hearted skipper had been cruelly strangled! I felt at once all the horror of my situation,—that I was standing over a magazine, and a spark would be certain destruction.

My plans were simple, and soon resolved upon. Calling the steward, who looked me brazenly in the face, I informed him that Captain Thompson was dead (I was certain that the steward himself was the murderer), and directed him to call Mr. Taylor from the deck. In a few minutes the latter came down, with a look of concern on his features which made me hate him more bitterly than ever; for I believed he was an accessory to the murder of the captain, if indeed not a principal in the accursed deed, and I put his grief down as hypocrisy at once. We conversed a few minutes about the suddenness of the affair, and I directed him to send two men to sew up the body in a hammock, which was done. No further incidents occurred that night; but I narrowly watched the second-mate, and noticed that from being a bully over the sailors he had suddenly become quite confidential with them. I needed no further proof that the captain's estimate of the man was correct.

Next day I had no work done, as the captain was buried at noon.

Watching the crew as closely as possible without rousing their suspicions, I became more and more convinced that I was on the brink of destruction. I determined to trust the only man in the barque, in whom I still hoped I might place confidence—the convict, Bush—and endeavor to secure him as a help in this my extremity. But he avoided me, evidently with much care. I was entirely alone, even the wretch whom I had befriended, and who had so warmly protested his gratitude, had deserted me.

At half-past eleven o'clock, I ordered the mainsail to be hauled up and the mainyard laid aback. The body of the murdered

captain was brought up, and laid on a hatch, one end of which rested on a cask, and the other on the weather rail. The heavy pitch-kettle was secured to the feet (we had not shot on board), and England's red ensign spread over all. The men stood around decorously as I read from a prayer-book the beautiful Episcopal service for the burial of the dead at sea; and as I read "we therefore commit his body to the deep," Bush launched the hatch over the side. A splash, and Enoch Thompson, but a few days before strong and vigorous, was gone forever! Concluding the service, I turned away; and the sailors went forward, collecting in a bunch near the galley.

At half-past twelve I called the steward, and directed him to tell Mr. Taylor to come on the quarter-deck, which he did, the second-mate soon making his appearance, from forward!

"Call all hands aft, Mr. Taylor," said I; and they were soon aft, in a body.

"Men," I commenced, "a good and honorable a man as ever breathed we have just buried, in the person of Captain Thompson. The command now devolves upon me, and you will consider Mr. Taylor as the chief officer, for the future. Nicholas Bush, I appoint you second-mate; you will bring your clothing aft, and enter upon your duties at once. That will do, men; you can go forward. Mr. Taylor, fill away the maintop-sail, and keep the barque on her course—give her the stun'-sail, sir, if the wind is free enough."

Not a man moved; and the second-mate, looking into my face with a sneer, said:—

"Hadr't you better do your own dirty work, Mr. *Captain*. Everybody in this packet has got to mind *you*, have they? *Captain* Ritchie, your little game's up aboard here. I'm captain now. What do you think of that?"

The demons had no idea that I suspected any mutiny on their part; and as I drew the dead captain's huge "navy Colt," and cocked it, I saw them wince and waver. The new mate, Taylor, sprang in among the men, who instinctively opened out on both sides, knowing that the scoundrel officer was the one I wished to hit, and not desiring to shield him with their own bodies. Had I managed to kill that man, at that moment, I am convinced that the mutineers would have at once yielded; and I should have killed him, but as I raised the pistol to take a

good aim at the villain as he cowered under the rail in a vain attempt to screen himself from the deadly weapon, I saw a shadow on the deck by my side, and had barely time to spring forward to escape a blow with a handspike that would have dashed out my brains. Turning upon my assailant, I found the steward—the murderer of the captain, as I believed—who had crept up behind me with a handspike; and before he could repeat his blow at my head, or speak or turn to fly, I fired full at his face, the muzzle of the pistol being so close to him that the flash of the powder burned his hair and whiskers. He fell dead in his tracks, without a cry or a groan.

But the interruption was fatal to my hope of quelling the mutiny. As I turned to again face the crew and their villainous leader, the whole mob were upon me. I fired one shot at Taylor, which, though it missed him, tore through the breast of another, letting out his life; and then I was knocked senseless by a blow from a belaying-pin. The mutineers had got possession of the barque, and I was bound and helpless, a prisoner in their hands, after killing two of their companions. I assure the reader that the prospect was anything but pleasing.

When I came to my senses, I found myself bound hand and foot, and tossed out of the way in alongside of spare spars. The barque was close-hauled to the wind, and the savage mob of devils were drinking liquors on the quarter-deck. Taylor came up to me, and spoke.

"Aha! Captain Ritchie, how do you like your new billet? We've got to mind *you*, have we? I'll show you who's master here, before I've done with you. Look here, now; where's that money? Out with all you know about it; spit it out!"

The money was skillfully hidden, and I knew they would have hard work to find it; it was in a cavity made between the two halves of a wooden anchor-stock, a spare one purchased for the purpose, and lashed to the foremast between decks, where it was now covered up with flour. I determined they should know nothing of its whereabouts from me, for I knew they would take my life at any rate, and refusing to tell where the gold was hidden could not make my fate much worse.

"I know of no money on board," replied I; "the freight was sent to Sydney by the mail-steamer."

"You lie, you hound; you lie," said Taylor, savagely, at the same time treating me to a vicious slap; "if you don't spout, and quick, too, we'll skin you alive."

"The other mutineers clustered around, and Taylor addressed them.

"This whelp won't tell where the money is, but we'll see if we can't make him squawk it out. Bring some oakum and a tar-bucket, one of you, and some matches."

Bush now came forward, and I determined to make one appeal to his gratitude. I addressed him:—

"Bush, is this what I get for trusting you? Do you call this fair?"—

"Shut up, you hound," said Taylor, again slapping my face; "we don't want any of your palaver here. Tell us where the money is, that's all we want of you. Bush will talk to you when I tell him."

I hoped and expected that they would not kill me till they *did* find out where the money was, and determined to save my life as long as possible, by keeping my knowledge to myself. But now Bush made an unexpected diversion in my favor.

"Look here, Taylor," said he, "you're settin' yourself up too almighty high, all at once. I just want you to understand that I'm as much skipper here as you are, or anybody else. And I'll speak to who I please, and it's none o' your business about it, either. An' if Mr. Ritchie's got anything to say to me he shall say it, and no thanks to the lot o' ye. I done my share o' the job, and I'll have my share o' the pay."

Taylor turned livid, and snatching from his belt the pistol which he had taken from me, he leveled it at this new mutineer; but Bush was too quick for him. The bullet went harmlessly through the air, the arch-traitor's hand being held over his head by one of Bush's, who had him by the throat with the other. A desperate struggle for the mastery ensued between the two men, the others standing around without attempting to interfere; as indeed it would not have been easy to do, so rapid were their contortions and shiftings of position.

The convict's eyes fairly blazed with rage, his lips foamed, and his bristly hair seemed to stand upright, but it was certainly not with fear. Taylor was frightened, and at a terrible disadvantage; for though a powerful man, he was clearly no match, in either strength or activity, for Bush, whose muscles and sinews now stood out like bunches of

knotted cords; and the convict's grip of his throat must soon prove fatal, unless the officer could escape it. By a tremendous exertion he wrenched his arm from Bush's hold, and dealt him a blow in the face with the revolver; the next moment the convict, whirling his antagonist round as though he were a child, dashed him with awful force against the mizzen-mast, near which they had arrived during their struggle. He fell like a clod; and Bush, picking him up in his arms, thrust him out through an open port, to a watery grave; then, turning to the rest of the crew, he demanded in a whispering voice, "if anybody else wanted to tell him who he should talk to?" Nobody did; the ruffian's demoniac look and evident strength and courage made him a man for such villains as the mutineers to respect. He picked up the revolver and stuck it in his belt; and soon after a general council was held, at which Bush and two others were elected to have command, there being eight others on board, all told, besides myself.

I was kept bound during the following night, and lay on deck, hungry, cold and despondent. But the next day I was released from the cords with which I had been tied, and confined in my own state-room, the door of which was kept always locked, and a man on watch at the door. The villains made no secret of their plan of action, which was to make the California coast, divide the money (if they could find it) and scuttle the barque. Part of the wretches advocated putting me to death; but Bush put such a decided veto on that plan, and the ferocity he showed in his fight with Taylor had given him so much influence, that it was finally decided to put me ashore on some island. I had hoped something favorable from Bush; but he never came near me without bringing another scamp with him, so that all chance of a private appeal to his better feelings was destroyed. I reproached him bitterly on more than one of these visits, for his treachery to one who had befriended him; but I could get no satisfaction.

On the morning of the fifth day after the mutiny a small island was sighted; and an earnest discussion ensued among the mutineers as to my disposal, which finally became an angry dispute. Part of the wretches wished to torture me, to find out where the money was hidden; they having, of course, failed to discover it by demolishing almost the whole cabin. Others were for finishing

me altogether, as "dead men could tell no tales." But Bush, and one other (a young fellow, a native of Launceston, Tasmania) were as loud as any, in demanding that I should be put ashore on the island; Bush saying that I should have blankets and food given me, besides. The wordy war waxed hot, and one of the three "captains" (who wished me to be tortured) drew his knife, telling Bush he "needn't think he was going to set himself up for a boss over all hands;" but the latter ended the quarrel and the discussion together, by shooting his opponent through the head. He was then tossed over the rail.

A few hours later I stood on the white beach of the low coral island, watching the unlucky Ringdove as she drew off the land, leaving me to my fate. The villains on board had given me a bag of hard bread, a hatchet and knife, a small keg of water and a blanket. To this abundant store Bush had added some tobacco.

I knew well enough that my position was well nigh desperate; it was very unlikely that I should find fresh water on so small an island, and my ten-gallon keg would soon be emptied; and the island itself—a mere speck on the wide waste of the Pacific—lay hundreds of miles from any frequented ocean track. My chance of escape was small indeed; but, as I watched the receding barque, a hope that I might yet be able to take vengeance on the mutineers, and particularly on Nick Bush, for my own treatment and the brutal murder of Captain Thompson, occupied a much larger share of my thoughts than did anxiety for the future; and I exulted as I thought of the swift retribution which had overtaken the steward and second-mate.

I watched the barque till she faded to a speck and then disappeared. When she was fairly lost to my view, I felt that I was indeed alone; not as I had felt in the forests of New Zealand or the desert plains of "up country" Australia, where a return to the haunts of my fellow-men was but a question of a few weeks, or months at most, but like one from whom the world was shut out forever, all save one pitiful, possibly unknown atom—my island.

But the sun was getting low, and I aroused myself to examine my prison. Piling my treasures up at the foot of a low species of palm tree, I started for a walk around the island, on the beach. But I was soon stopped by a channel of water, apparently very deep,

which extended into the island, spreading out so as to take up a very large portion of the interior. The island was a mere shell, a strip of land nearly circular, surrounding a salt lake on all sides except at the channel which had halted me; from the ocean beach on the outside to the margin of the placid waters within, the land was nowhere more than a quarter of a mile across. The lagoon or lake in the centre was perhaps a mile and a half in diameter. The mutineers had put me on a nice place!

Returning to my worldly goods, I took a drink of the precious liquid, and ate a biscuit. I had a few matches, and recklessly lighted one to start my pipe, saying to myself as I did so that I had as many matches as would last me as long as I lived. I had no desire to explore my domain any further at present; so, although the sun was still above the horizon, I spread my blanket beneath one of the slender trees with which the island was thickly covered, and lay down to sleep. Odd as it may appear, I soon dropped off, and did not wake up till after sunrise next morning.

The reader would derive little interest from a detailed account of what I did while on the island. It is sufficient for me to say that I found water everywhere I dug (with a wooden spade) at the level of the sea. It was brackish and sickening, but I drank it, and felt but little inconvenience from so doing. I found no signs of animal life, excepting a few small birds, on the island; nor did I find, what I hoped and expected, either cocoanuts or bread-fruit.

I scarcely took the trouble to look for ships, from the first. I knew well that my habitation was seldom, if ever, sighted by passing vessels; and a dull apathy took possession of my mind and body, from the moment I became satisfied that I had no possible means of procuring food after my slender stock of bread was exhausted. Day after day I lay listlessly under my tree—the one beneath which I first lay down to sleep—bestirring myself only when hungry or thirsty, when I would get up, eat or drink as freely as though the world's stores were at my command, and lie down again to wonder how long this would last. I never till the day I left, walked round the little islet!

One morning, after my thankless meal, I asked myself curiously how long I had been on this shore? I tried to recollect, but could not; and I soon gave up the attempt, and lay down again to pass another aimless, weary,

thoughtless day; but I was soon roused up.

A dull booming sound, like the distant roar of a heavy gun, brought me to my feet, and started the blood through my veins by speaking a hope of escape to my heart. I looked anxiously—how anxiously I cannot make known to those who have never been in similar desperate straits themselves—along that part of the horizon which was visible from where I stood. There was nothing in sight—not so much as a seagull. Then I started like a madman (and indeed I was not far short of madness) along the beach, running as though my life depended on my speed.

Again the booming sound—beautiful music it was to me—reached my ears; and as I ran frantically along the smooth white beach I yelled like a raving maniac, in answer to the sound. I had no power of thought left, or I would have laughed at the absurdity of replying to the thunder of that distant gun with my feeble cries. I arrived at the opposite side of the island from where I had hitherto existed, and stopped, exhausted with the violence of my physical efforts and my mental agitation, dizzy with hope and fear—hope of life and fear of madness—for I dreaded lest reason was leaving me, and the sounds were not real.

A third time the sweet-voiced minstrel sent the cheering messenger of hope to my island and to me; and collecting my faculties with a mighty effort, I looked again to seaward.

I was saved. Not more than five miles away was a ship, steering straight for the island; and as I looked, hardly daring to believe the joyous sight, a puff of white smoke shot out from her side, and curled gracefully upward until it faded quite away. And then when I had almost done listening for the sound, it came—dull as before, but louder and more distinct. Far off on the horizon was another sail; but I cared nothing for that one. All my thoughts and hopes were centered on the steadily approaching ship from which the guns had been fired, and which still kept them sounding over the sea.

She came on till within about two miles, when her maintopsail was backed, and a boat lowered, which made for the shore. The most agonized period of my life was the short time I stood on that desolate beach and watched that approaching boat. My thoughts were in a whirl; and fear, which

had kept aloof when death seemed inevitable, now seized upon me when deliverance was at hand. Would the boat really land and take me off, or would her crew go away and leave me, as the other boat's crew had done? Did the people in the ship really intend to save me (it never occurred to me to wonder how they could possibly have known I was there), or were they only playing a cruel trick? If they didn't mean to save me, what were they firing guns for? And if they meant to save me, might they not go away without seeing me? Might they not think I was dead, and leave me to die, after all? Such were some of the wild fancies which chased each other through my addled brain; but I did not once ask myself what brought the ship there—for it was a ship, and not the Ringdove.

As the possibility that I might not be seen occurred to me, I again became frantic; and after screaming and gesticulating until the crew in the boat (who were near enough to see and hear me plainly and to answer me in return) thought me maddened outright with suffering, I rushed furiously down the beach to meet the boat. Out into the water I went; but the shore, sloping very gently for a few score feet, then suddenly dropped down into the bold water; I suddenly dropped, too. I am a good swimmer; and as there was no surf, and but little swell, on that side of the island, I soon scrambled out again.

The ducking did me good—I have sometimes thought, possibly saved my reason. At any rate, I didn't act like a demented fool any more, but quietly waited until the boat was beached. A man jumped out, and grasping me warmly by the hand, saluted me with:—

"Thank God! Mr. Ritchie, how are you?"

Before I could speak a word in answer, a second man, who had left the boat but a moment after the first, thrust out his hand to take mine, saying as he did so, in a tone of almost childish ecstasy:—

"I've saved him—I've saved him! It's me, sir—don't you know me, Mr. Ritchie?"

It was Nick Bush!

Snatching my hand from the grasp of the naval officer (for such his uniform bespoke him), I drew my knife in my right hand, and with a sudden spring clutched Bush by the throat with the left.

"Die—curse you—die," I yelled, raising the knife to strike; and though Nick was far

my overmatch in strength at any time, and I was now but little better than a wreck, yet so sudden was my assault that I should certainly have slain him had not the officer grasped my arm. I was easily overpowered and disarmed; and the officer told me:—

“Mr. Ritchie, that man has periled his life to save yours. He is not to blame for the mutiny. If it had not been for him, we should never have known of your being here.”

“Mr. Ritchie,” said Bush, “I was not to blame for the mutiny. I knew of it before it happened, I own. But I was afraid to speak to you about it, ’cause they mistrusted me and watched me; and I don’t know how to write. But Tom the Van Diemian (the young man who had joined Bush in demanding my being put on shore on the island) and I had agreed that when the time came for the risin’, I was to kill the second mate and Tom was to skiver the steward—them’s the ones started it first. We thought that would stop it—specially if you should fight good, and I knowed you carried a big revolver, ’cause I seen you with it the night the cap’in died. He was poisoned, he was—the steward did it. But when the second mate started, me and Tom wasn’t ready; I didn’t have no knife, and Tom wouldn’t start till I did. And after the barque was took and we was all mutineers, everybody was watchin’ so sharp after everybody else, that I daresn’t speak to you decent, nor try to do anything more’n I did, for fear we’d both be done for, sir. If it had come to that, Mr. Ritchie, I’d have sold my life for yours, sir. You’re the only man ever done me a kindness without wantin’ pay for it, an’ you never made me feel that you knowed I was a convic’; I’d have given my life for you, if ’twould ’a’ done any good. Won’t you give me your hand, sir?” he finished, in a tone of earnest entreaty.

“He speaks the truth, Mr. Ritchie, I do believe,” said the naval officer; and the earnest tone and look of Bush convinced me that it was so. And I shook hands heartily with the man whom I had so bitterly hated and had just tried to kill, and spoke a few words; while he, the big, powerful ruffian, whose life had been one long career of lawless and desperate deeds, cried like a child with delight.

But little time was spent on the island, after this. The lieutenant and Bush walked around with me to my late “residence,”

the boat returning to the ship with instructions and information. In an hour or so, the ship having run down opposite the place where I was first landed by the mutineers, the boat returned, and we all re-embarked; and I was soon on board her Britannic majesty’s corvette, “Cordelia,” Hon. James Hope captain, where I was kindly and cordially received by the gentlemanly officers.

There is no more to tell, except to explain the manner in which the corvette was informed of what had taken place and where I was, and to narrate the fate of the mutineers. First, as to the Ringdove and her rascally captors.

On the morning of the fifth day after leaving me on the islet, a sail was made out, a long way off; but the rapidity with which the stranger rose above the horizon made it evident she was running down across the barque’s course, the latter being close-hauled on a wind. As the strange ship soon came plainly in sight, the mutineers were not long in making her out to be an English cruiser—the most unwelcome visitor they could possibly have met. But it was of no use to try to run away—their only chance was to “pull wool” over the cruiser’s eyes. Wilson had already fixed the papers all right, as far as he was able; and now dressed himself up to represent a merchant skipper. It was hoped the corvette would be satisfied with a mere passing hail, and not send any boat on board the Ringdove; as the cruiser was evidently making a passage. Everything was prepared as the Cordelia, having run down within speaking distance, hauled her wind and stood along on the same tack as the Ringdove, to windward of the barque. Wilson was standing on the weather quarter of the barque, with a glass in his hand; Bush was on the break of the poop, to attend to working the vessel, if need be; and the seamen were clustered along the weather rail, in genuine merchantman style. As the corvette slowly drew ahead and took the wind from the Ringdove’s sails, an officer standing on the former’s hammock-nettings hailed:—

“Barque ahoy!”

“Ay, ay,” responded Wilson.

“What barque is that?”

“The Ringdove.”

“Who commands the Ringdove?”

“Wilson.”

“Where are you from?”

“Valparaiso.”

"Where are you bound?"

"To Port Townsend, Oregon—cargo of flour."

"How long are you out?" continued the interrogator through his trumpet, as the corvette drew ahead; but the answer to this demand came from an unexpected quarter—the fo'castle. Bush, fearing that the unsuspecting cruiser would be deceived by the appearance of things on board the barque, and bear up as soon as she was far enough ahead to cross the Ringdove's forefoot, determined to do some hailing himself; and from him came the answer to the question "how long are you out?"

"Long enough to kill the skipper and take the barque! Send a boat aboard, and see!"

This was a queer answer to return to a question from her majesty's quarter-deck; and it had the desired effect on board the corvette, and created a decided sensation on board the barque. The mutineers knew that their game was up, and their doom sure; nothing they could now do could make the case more desperate—and a savage attack was made on Bush by Wilson and several of the others, to punish his treachery; no attention being paid to the man-of-war's command to "lay aback the head yards."

Bush had expected a fight, and was of course prepared for it; and when Wilson neared him he snapped his revolver in his face, but the weapon missed fire.

"Kill the hound—kill him," howled Wilson; "we'll be scragged (hung) anyhow—kill him, kill him."

But Bush managed to get into the rigging and away aloft, though he received several wounds; and before his assailants could hit upon a way to get at him, an armed boat's crew came tumbling over the barque's rail, and in on her deck. The corvette, finding her orders disregarded, and seeing the com-

motion on board, had backed her own yards when she got far enough ahead, and lowered the boat, which had hooked on to the barque's chains as the latter glided past. Resistance was out of the question, and the crew, including "Captain" Wilson, were all soon transferred to the Cordelia's "brig," and heavily ironed; a crew and officer from the war vessel taking possession in their place.

The Cordelia was from Callao, bound to Melbourne, Australia; and as soon as her commander was informed by Bush of all that had occurred, all sail was made to save me, if possible, the barque being directed to follow with all practicable speed. The result has already been made known.

The punishment of the pirates is soon related. Bush and Launceston Tom were kept apart from each other until they arrived at Sydney, whither the two ships proceeded; but they were not ironed, and received many favors. On arriving in Sydney the mutineers were put on trial for piracy and murder. The crown prosecutor, informed the court that no evidence could be presented against Bush and Launceston Tom, and they were consequently discharged from custody. They were then examined singly, and their evidence was so well sustained and so frankly given, that I was but a short time on the witness stand, when my turn came to testify. The entire company of the rascals were condemned to death, and expiated their crimes on the gallows. Bush and Launceston Tom both got work "up the country," on a cattle station; and the last I heard of them, both were doing well, Bush being head stock man, a position of some trust and responsibility. Captain Thompson's wife and child came into possession of his property; and the Ringdove's next trip was taken under Captain Ritchie.

A SEA IDYLL.

BY ALICE STAPLES CARTER.

LAST night I saw the mermaids ride
On shore-bound waves with music wild,
And watched them where, against the cliffs,
Their bowers of snowy foam they piled.

All night they worked; but when the dawn
Came blushing rosy o'er the deep,
The sea, grown weary of the toil,
Recalled his waves, and sank to sleep.

The mermaids wept, and combed their hair,
Melted were all their foam-wreathed bowers,
Till one sweet mermaid sang, "Let's make
New arbors of the white sea-flowers."

"Yes, yes," they cried; and, hand in hand,
Sank through the blue depths joyously;
And now, I ween, they're gathering flowers
In the bright gardens of the sea.

THE TEXAN COWBOY.

"GUESTS will please remove their pistols before entering the dining-room," was the sign which met your eyes as you stepped into the office of any of the hotels in Abilene, Kansas, in the early days when that town was the headquarters of the Texas cattle-trade for the United States. "I'm a wolf, and it's my night to howl! I'm a bucking cayuse from Bitter Creek, wild and woolly and hard to curry! Whoop-pee! Every one take a drink!" were the words you could have heard uttered by some tipsy cowboy in any of the numerous drinking saloons in the same town almost any day or night during the season; and very often these words would be followed by shots from his revolvers, pointed in the air—just for the sake of hearing a noise, you know.

"Dance and move your feet quickly, or I'll fill you so full of holes your mother will take you for a flour-sifter!" This exclamation was one often heard from one or other of the many wild frontiersmen who had picked on some greenhorn or "tenderfoot" whom he desired to see dance, for the benefit of the crowd always to be found in the bar-rooms, and whose movements he accelerated by shooting into the floor in close proximity to his victim's feet.

"Down in time and make your game!" called out the dealer sitting behind the faro table, at which from six to a dozen cowboys could always be found gambling, or, as they called it, "bucking the tiger."

Such is a picture of the frolics of the cowboy in town, who, just in from Texas by the old Chisholm Trail, has "filled up" with fighting-whisky, which was considered the proper thing to do after his three or four months' drive across the vast prairies and swollen rivers *en route*. Here he is seen at his worst, with all the discipline maintained in camp by the foreman or "boss herder" removed; here he turns himself loose, to use his own expression, and acts as one of the wild cattle or horses which he is daily in company with would, if turned loose in a china-shop. From this standpoint, too, he is too often judged by people who have no idea of his life and the dangers he is surrounded with on the trail and range. In reality, the old-time cowboy is generally a

wild, reckless, generous, big-hearted spirit, a rough diamond, thorough in everything he undertakes; rough, but honest; and in his camp his hospitality is proverbial. The cow-camp is a haven to the traveler, who is made welcome as he rides up, usually being greeted with the salutation: "Light, stranger; chuck is just about ready, and I guess you can stow away right smart chance of it"; which being interpreted means: Alight; a meal is ready; and the host thinks his visitor can enjoy a good one.

The cattle he works with are the long-horned breed, raised on the vast plains of South-western Texas, and New Mexico, which originally are supposed to have been introduced by the Spaniards. On these plains they are allowed to roam at will; each creature bears the brand of the owner on its side or hip; the only control exercised over them being at the yearly round-up, when the calves are branded, and such full-grown cattle gathered into a herd as are needed to send to the northern markets. These herds were until recently driven north by the cowboys crossing the Red River, through the Indian nation and Southern Kansas, to the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad, or the Kansas Pacific or Union Pacific. The road traveled is called a trail, which from time to time, as civilization pushed westward, was changed. The government have now, however, prohibited the opening up of any new trails from Texas northward, because the emigration has been so heavy into the West in late years as to render it impossible to drive large herds of cattle through Northern Texas and Kansas without retarding settlements. "Life on the trail" really means the life the boys used to lead in years gone by on this great thoroughfare from Texas; while "life on the range" is usually the term used in speaking of the life at present on the cattle-ranges in Wyoming, Dakota, Colorado, and Montana, where the original long-horns from the South have been bred with fine-grade cattle of the North, resulting in large creatures, better fitted for beef; and although they roam at will over the prairies, yet are not so wild as their fellows raised through the South.

It was no unusual thing for the old-time cattle kings of the South to brand several thousand calves each year; and their ranges, obtained through the old Spanish land-grants, extended over several hundred square miles. On these ranges, the ponies—descendants of the Spanish barb imported from Spain, and turned loose generations since—used for the work run at large, and, of course, are as wild as the cattle. When the time arrives for the start to be made with a herd, the necessary number of these wild ponies are gathered, and the cowboys have eight or ten assigned to each one to ride during the drive; this necessitates good riding, courage, and recklessness. Each morning during the drive these ponies have to be lassoed and really rebroken; for a day or two of rest will be sufficient for them to forget the control obtained over them when being ridden before.

The cattle to be sent to market are driven into an enclosure called a corral, and a second brand, called a "road brand," is burnt on their sides or hips. This is done in order that the cowboy may be able to distinguish those belonging to the herd he is attached to from those in other herds from the same range; for in years gone by, these southern cattle-owners often started two or three herds up the trail the same season, besides selling to dealers who operated between the ranges and the markets. The consequence of this branding is that many a creature will be seen with its sides and hips covered with different letters, figures, and characters,—the brands of the different owners through which it has passed,—until the hair is only visible in patches, the flesh being burned into ridges resembling a chess or back-gammon board. After the road branding is done, the herd, usually numbering from five to fifteen hundred head, is started on the trail, with an average of twelve cowboys to each thousand head, and a foreman; and followed by a huge wagon, loaded with flour, bacon, coffee, syrup, sugar, and salt, the provisions for the drive, which will occupy from two to four months. The teamster with the wagon also acts as cook for the camp; and although he would not pass muster in a first-class hotel or restaurant, yet a stranger would be astonished at the excellence of the meals he cooks in the open air, despite the weather.

The distance usually traveled each day is from twelve to eighteen miles, according to

the distance between water; for, when possible, the camp is made every night on the banks of a stream. The start each morning is made at sunrise, with a mid-day stop from about ten o'clock till two; then drive again till about five o'clock in the evening, the cattle being allowed to graze and drink at these stops. At dusk the cattle are gathered together, usually on sloping ground, and bedded down, as it is called, the cowboys riding around the group singing loudly, to quiet the cattle, which after a short time lie down to rest. Then all but two of the boys go to camp, spread their blankets on the ground, with the heavens for their only roof, and turn in to sleep, until each is awakened in his turn to keep guard over the sleeping cattle. This is called night-herding. If the weather is stormy, then the boys may look out for hard work; for the vivid lightning and loud thunder which visit these vast prairies are almost sure to frighten the wild cattle and madden them, until they start on a stampede, running at a furious rate, regardless of all obstacles, in a vain endeavor to get away from the drenching rain and out of sight and hearing of the lightning and thunder.

At the first sign of a regular stampede, all hands are ordered out except the cook; the horses, which are kept saddled in readiness for an emergency, are mounted, and away to the front of the wildly running herd ride the cowboys, singing and shouting as they go; for, to a certain extent, the cattle will follow the human voice. And the object of the men is to lead the foremost cattle in a circle until they mix up with those in the rear of the herd; and as they crowd together—or mill, as it is called—they are checked in their mad race and gradually quieted. All the courage and nerve of the cowboy are required in handling a stampede, for if by any accident he is thrown from his horse, he will be crushed beyond all recognition by the sharp hoofs of the maddened brutes.

But once quieted, it does not follow that the herd will again go to rest; very often the first run is followed by others, each one more furious than the last, as the cattle become more frightened, until daylight. Then a count is taken; and if any are missing,—as there usually are, not only cattle but men,—the surrounding country is scoured for trails or fresh tracks leading away from the camp, which, when found, are followed by the man who discovers them, who, regardless of food,

water, or sleep, is supposed to follow this clew until he overtakes the cattle the tracks are made by, the main herd being halted in the locality until all the strays have been brought in; or if only a few head are missing, the men who are sent to search for them are instructed to follow the main trail until they catch up. Of course these searches mean long rides over a strange country; for often, after separating from the herd, a bunch of cattle will travel at the rate of twenty-five or thirty miles a day, usually in the direction of the range from which they were originally driven; and all the powers of endurance of the men are brought into requisition in a search of this kind, for no excuse will be taken by the foreman for the hunter's return without the cattle, except starvation really stares him in the face.

On the trail, each day is a repetition of the previous one. In pleasant weather, the cowboy's life is not so hard; but in wet, stormy weather he is continually in the saddle, wet through most of the time; and yet he is happy, with no other company for months than his own immediate companions. He never gets lonesome or homesick, but is always possessed of the same careless, reckless spirit which asserts itself so strongly when at the end of his drive he reaches the settlements and goes for a frolic to the town.

Life on the ranches in the north-western states and territories differs from that on the trail in many respects, the most noticeable being that instead of the ground for his bedstead, the heavens for a roof, and his saddle for a pillow, he has a comfortable house to live in—either a log cabin or a "dugout," according to the supply of timber in the neighborhood—provided with large fireplaces, in which on a cold night the logs and pitchy pine-knots are heaped on, and where the boys can amuse themselves with cards, or "swapping lies," as they call it, smoke, and have a good time generally, although their nearest neighbor may be, and often is, twenty miles distant. Another difference:

in stormy weather the cowboy on the ranch can usually stay in the house. Especially in the winter is his life an easy one, for at that season the cattle are pretty well left to shift for themselves, it being considered better not to drive cattle around at that season more than is necessary, as they need all their strength to keep them alive through the storms, and to keep up their courage to hustle around and gather enough grass to keep them from starving, because there is no hay served to them except when running in very small herds, less than one hundred head.

The "round-ups" in these ranges are made similarly to those on the southern, except that two are made yearly instead of one—the first, to brand the calves early in the spring and ascertain the losses sustained during the winter, which is called the general round-up, and is attended by all the cattle-owners, with their cowboys, who own herds in a certain section, probably being a hundred miles square. This is necessary, because in the north-west it is impossible to obtain large grants of land, as in Texas and Mexico; therefore, the cattle range on the public domain, and the owners build their ranches in the valley of some river, turn the cattle loose, and in the spring hunt them up at the general round-up. Then in the autumn the beef round-up takes place, when all the bullocks or steers over three years old are separated from the main herd and sent to market.

During the spring and summer months, especially at the round-up, the cowboys have to work hard; but not being engaged on one drive so long as they used to on the trail, they go to town more frequently, and consequently are not so wild when there as the old-timers on the Texas trails used to be. As this great north-west is settling up very rapidly, and railroads being extended, the cowboy of the past is fast disappearing, and giving place to a perfectly civilized successor.

Ask thy lone soul what laws are plain to thee;
Thee and no other; stand or fall by them!
That is the part for thee; regard all else
For what it may be—time's illusion. This
Be sure, ignorance that sins is safe.
No punishment like knowledge!

—Robert Browning.

A FATAL WHIM.

BY L. S. KEYSER.

CHAPTER I.

PHIL FLEMMING was driving leisurely along the dusty highway, one pleasant Sunday evening of early autumn, wrapped in such profound meditation that he was oblivious to all scenes and sounds around him. In his absent-minded mood he was tapping the weeds by the wayside with his long carriage-whip. The young husbandman was intent on an errand that was of no trivial concern to him. According to the custom in vogue among the young knights of the neighborhood, he had made an appointment for the evening with a blue-eyed rural lady in whom he was interested, and was now on his way to her home, intending to persuade her to accompany him on a drive. But it was not that alone that caused his deep abstraction, for such drives had been of frequent occurrence of late, and therefore it must have been something unusual that caused him to knit his brow in such engrossing thought on that particular evening. The fact is, he had begun to care a great deal for Elnora Bateman, and the more frequent their interviews had been, the more infatuated he had become, until he felt that she was the necessary complement of his life. He had resolved, therefore, to declare his passion that night, and ask her to be his wife.

Having hitched his horse at the gate in front of the Bateman "place," he made his way up the walk to the veranda, where he was met and greeted by a girl with a bright, welcoming smile. To say that she was pretty would be a mere platitude, and yet it would be true.

Of course, it must not be supposed that she was seraphic or sylph-like, nor that she had a dreamy, far-away look. Elnora Bateman was real flesh and blood, and Phil liked her none the less because her beauty was of a human and not a supramundane type.

She was pretty because her complexion was fair, her features regular and well-proportioned, while the glow of health shone on her cheeks. Any young farmer, with a proper degree of susceptibility, would have succumbed to her fascinations, and, in fact, she had attracted more than one admirer to

her side and had made him her devoted minion. But just at the present time all others kept their distance, for, as they expressed it in their elegant phraseology, "There's no show for any of us now; Phil Flemming's got the inside track."

Beautiful as Elnora was, a more acute examination might have revealed to her ardent lover a trait of character not altogether pleasant to contemplate. Her eyes were blue, the color in them varying in intensity according to the emotions that stirred her. A close scrutiny would have made the discovery that there was a restless, dissatisfied expression in them, indicating a nature more or less vacillating and capricious. Of course Phil, in his enthralled state, did not notice this.

In a few minutes he had assisted her into the carriage, and they were whirling gayly along the road. The moon was just rising above the eastern forests, pouring a mellow light over the hills and into the broad valleys, and making the flexuous stream gleam like ribbons of silver in the green meadows. A lover of the placid in nature would have been enchanted by the soft scene. However, Phil's thoughts were elsewhere than on the beauties of the natural world. As the pale lunar light fell upon Elnora's oval cheeks and ruby lips, it seemed to him that her fascinations were enhanced many times, and he could scarcely refrain from breaking out into a laudatory speech on her attractions.

Phil followed a very circuitous course that night, and, with intention, he at last directed his horse toward his own home, an excellent farm lying at the head of one of the smaller valleys of the region. All evening he was planning some ruse which would afford a natural and easy approach to the subject lying nearest his heart. If he took Elnora past his farm, perhaps that would furnish an occasion for broaching the matter without too much precipitancy. He could not blurt right out at once, "Dearest, I love you!" By some skillfully laid out plan or "fair device" he must introduce so delicate a theme into their colloquy. They were driving down the sloping hill past his farm, when he remarked, tentatively:—

"What do you think of my place, Elnora?"

"I think it a very fine one," she replied. "There isn't a pleasanter farm in the neighborhood, and you always keep it in good repair. How beautifully green the lawn in front of the house always is?"

"And don't you think the location of the orchard is charming?"

"Oh, yes; it slopes up so gradually in the rear of the house, making a background for the buildings. I never saw a more beautiful sight than it presented last spring when all the trees were in bloom. They flashed in every variety of color. And then the locust grove below the orchard, covered with white blossoms, made the brighter hues look as if they had sprung up out of a pure soil. Yes, it is a well-cultivated farm and reflects credit on its owner," she added, looking at him furtively. "The buildings are all skillfully arranged, too—with one exception."

"What is that?" he inquired.

"Oh, I don't like to find fault," she answered, apologetically.

"I do not consider it finding fault when you point out a defect in the arrangement. In fact, I like to have you take enough interest in my farm to do so. I should be pleased to know what it is that does not suit your taste."

"Well, if you insist, it is that red spring-house to the left of the main building; it is too conspicuous and too—too glaring."

"Oh, do you mean that? It is an eyesore, I admit. Well, if it does not suit you, I shall have it moved away."

Her blue eyes shot a glance at him, while a half-quizzing expression was in them, as much as to say, "What do you mean?" But instead she said, laughingly, "You needn't remove it simply because I found fault with it."

"If it does not suit your taste, I shall tear down the offensive building," he said, decisively, and there was an unmistakable ardor in his tones.

"Why, Phil, my judgment is not infallible, and others might differ from me in opinion."

"Nevertheless, I shall make it to please you, Elnora, no matter what others may say or think," he replied, still more emphatically, looking at her with eyes that blazed in the moonlight.

"Oh!"

"Yes, Elnora, it is you I want to please.

Have you any other objection to my farm?"

"None at all," she rejoined.

"I am so pleased to know that you like it so well," he said, with an earnestness that caused her to look up at him in surprise, "because there is no one whose good opinion I value as highly as yours," he continued, in a constrained voice; then, more courageously, "How do you think you would like to live here yourself, Elnora?"

"What a question!" she answered, pretending that she did not see the underlying purpose of his interrogation. "Who wouldn't like to have such a home?"

"You do not understand me," he replied. "Let me ask you plainly, then; will you let my home be your home?" As she did not reply, he proceeded: "It is a very pleasant home as far as all the outward appointments are concerned, but there is a presence lacking in it, without which it is dark and lonely."

She did not look at him now, but bent her eyes upon the bright-colored robe thrown across her lap, as if its texture were engrossing her attention. Phil could not endure the uncertainty any longer, and so he broke out, passionately:—

"Elnora, dear, how shall I tell you of the love I feel for you now, and have felt for many, many months? Can you give me an answer now? Will you be the light of my home?"

At length she looked him fully in the face, and answered, softly, "If you want me to very, very much, I like you well enough to please you."

The lines dropped upon the dashboard, and Phil's horse was permitted to jog along the road at his own sweet will, while the happy lover gave expression to the tumultuous emotions of the heart. As he lifted her tenderly from the carriage that evening at her gate and clasped her for a moment to his bosom, he said, impetuously:—

"Elnora, my love, I am the happiest man in the whole neighborhood to-night!"

He drove home with a look of exultation on his bronzed, handsome face, and a heart full of grand emotions. The future was painted with the most roseate colors by the brush of his excited fancy. In all the district there should not be a pleasanter home than his, with Elnora as its queen. His love for the girl ennobled and purified his whole being, and he felt that he could not bear to do a mean thing with the conscious-

ness that she loved him and had promised to unite her destiny with his. In fact, Phil was a young man of good and honorable principles. Impetuous and passionate he was to a fault; but as a palliative of this defect of character, it must be said that he was above holding a grudge against anyone who had wronged him, and he had never been known to take an underhanded advantage even of an enemy. With the exception that he had a little too large an element of impetuosity in his temperament, there were very few young farmers of that section who stood higher in the estimation of the neighborhood than Phil Flemming.

CHAPTER II.

HE was now a happy man, for he had been successful in his wooing, and he had the most implicit confidence in Elnora's constancy. As an evidence of his devotion to her, he had torn down the objectional red spring-house before the week was past, and ere long a handsome, well-arranged structure appeared in its place. And when Elnora expressed herself highly pleased with the new building, the impetuous young farmer caressed her with almost vehement fondness as the best method of showing his gratitude.

The love-suit flourished without intervention for a number of months. Phil was frequently at Elnora's side, accompanying her to all the rural gatherings, and in many ways showing his devotion to her. Full arrangement had been made that their marriage should take place the following spring, and for this event Phil made the most elaborate preparations. There were so many things to "fix up," as he said, before his home would be in readiness to receive its new queen.

In mid-winter a cloud began to gather on the horizon of Phil's fair sky of love and anticipation. At first it gave him little anxiety; but soon its aspect became more lowering. On several occasions when he was with Elnora she seemed strangely cold and listless. It was obvious that something was weighing on her mind, but when Phil asked her the cause of her absent-minded moods, she blushed and put him off evasively. Her strange mood continued for several weeks, making her at times petulant and capricious, and causing her lover increased

uneasiness, until one evening the enigma was solved in an unexpected way.

It was Sunday evening, and Phil had hitched his bay to the cutter, and was driving over to the Bateman place to visit his affianced. True, he had made no appointment with her for that particular evening, but during the day there had been quite a snow-fall and the roads were in fine condition for sleighing. He could not resist the temptation of asking her to drive out with him on such a night. Since they were engaged he felt that he need not be so conventional, but could exercise an accepted lover's prerogative of calling at any time. As he drove up to the gate, he was surprised to see a horse and cutter standing there, and upon closer inspection his astonishment was undiminished when he recognized the conveyance as that of a young physician who had recently established an office in the village several miles distant.

"Some one must be sick," he said to himself, anxiously; "perhaps it is Elnora."

Phil quickly tied and blanketed his horse, and then with his heart almost in his throat he hastened up the walk, and knocked nervously at the door. When he entered he found, to his surprise, that the young physician and Elnora were alone, the rest of the family having evidently gone to the country church not far distant. Elnora's crimson cheeks did not escape his notice, and he felt puzzled when he saw that her eyes dropped before his fixed gaze as he looked inquiringly into her face.

"Why, Elnora, are you ill?" was his first question.

The red blood surged again to her cheeks and temples, and then left them pallid, as she falteringly responded: "Oh—no—no—I am as well as usual."

"Why have you called the doctor, then, if you are not ill?" he demanded, in tones that were constrained by a perplexed emotion.

Elnora did not answer, but there were unmistakable indications of guilt and shame on her changeable face; and so the young master of physic thought it time to interfere.

"Mr. Flemming," he began, in his blandest tones, "I cannot always be engaged in professional work. I must have some relaxation from the cares of business, and so I have only come to make a friendly call and spend the evening with Miss Bateman."

Phil felt that there was a latent and unex-

pressed suggestiveness in the doctor's tones; which the latter meant him to understand, and his suspicions were at once aroused.

"A friendly call! To spend the evening!" echoed Phil, and for a moment he regarded the other with a scowl of displeasure. Then he broke out: "Do you mean to say, Doctor Westupton, that you are here by a special arrangement with Miss Bateman?"

"Oh, certainly, certainly, Mr. Flemming," replied the other, in mocking tones. "I should not be here if I felt that my presence were distasteful to Miss Bateman."

Phil was now trembling with rage. His impetuous temper was almost getting the better of him. It was only necessary that the young M. D. should answer him another question in those smooth tones of mockery to make the irascible farmer break out in uncontrollable anger. Phil's question was:—

"And you mean to insinuate that you have been here before?"

"You are an impertinent fellow, I must say," sneered the doctor, aroused by Phil's angry tones. What business is it of yours, sir, if I had previous appointments with her?"

"I have a right to know, and I shall know," replied Phil, stepping forward, menacingly.

"Pooh! what boorish, unmannerly fellows these clodhoppers are!" said Westupton, contemptuously.

"Be careful how you address me!" exclaimed Phil. "I demand your answer to my question: Have you been on such errands, before this evening? Tell me, sir, or I shall put you out of that door!" And Phil looked dangerous.

The doctor rose from his chair and met Phil's angry menace with an undaunted eye, in which seemed to be mingled both pity and contempt. He was either a brave man, or was an adept at simulating courage, for he replied without a quiver of his voice:—

"Miss Bateman, do you see what a rude, uncultivated man you have been admitting to your friendship? He even wants to fight like a ruffian in your own house." There was a polished, concentrated scorn in his tones that stung Phil like a rapier driven to his heart, and humbling him for a moment. Then the doctor resumed: "Mr. Flemming, I am not afraid of you, but it is ungentlemanly to quarrel before a lady in her own

house; and besides, I am no slugger. I have never practiced such brutal exercise, as you evidently have. Therefore, in order to avoid a collision with you and to appease your rage, I will tell you plainly this is *not* the first time I have called on Miss Bateman."

Phil was almost disconcerted, for he was sure that the affability of his rival had prejudiced Elnora in his favor, especially when she contrasted them with his own rude and belligerent conduct. Still he was quick-witted and in a moment was ready with a reply:—

"You may call me rough and rude, if you will, Dr. Westupton, but it is not always these finespun fellows, glib tongues and smooth manners, who are best at heart. The sepulchres in olden times were beautiful enough on the outside, but what were they on the inside, sir?" The doctor winced, though almost imperceptibly, at this caustic retort. Then Phil continued: "Let me ask you another question, and I demand an unequivocal answer. Have these calls been made with Miss Bateman's consent?"

"With her consent, of course, and sometimes at her courteous invitation."

Phil was stunned for a moment. The blow had come upon him so unexpectedly that he was not able to bear up under it with equanimity. It was hard to be calm when the girl he had loved so devotedly and trusted so implicitly was about to be proven false; for he saw intuitively that her relations with the physician must have already attained some degree of intimacy, that the latter felt warranted in using the language he had in her presence. There evidently was an understanding between them. Presently the bewildered lover turned to Elnora and asked in a voice tense with emotion: "Elnora, is this true?"

She sat blushing with confusion, and did not reply. He came up close to her and reiterated his question. "Is it true, Elnora?" he now demanded angrily.

When the girl saw that she had fallen into a trap, and that she could carry her deception no farther, she rose suddenly and confronted him with a gleam of determination in her blue eyes, while the blood went from her cheeks. "Yes, sir, it is true, and you may make the best of it, Mr. Phil Flemming," she said, in a voice husky with anger.

"It is impossible, Elnora"—he began

almost plaintively, for there was a terrible, hollow ache in his heart now as he looked into her flashing, defiant eyes. "Was your love for me only a whim, and has your fancy changed so quickly?"

"I will hear no more," she answered, with an angry gesticulation.

"May I see you on the veranda a moment alone?" Phil said.

As they moved toward the door, Phil glanced back at Dr. Westupton, and said: "Doctor, I give you warning to stay out of my way."

"You had better adverstitute yourself as a professional pugilist," vouchsafed the doctor, with a mocking laugh; and Phil saw that he had blundered again by making such a coarse threat.

"What am I to understand by these visits of Dr. Westupton?" he said, as he stood before the girl on the veranda.

"Anything you like, sir," she answered, in a hard voice.

"I cannot allow this, Elnora, as long as you are engaged to me."

"You needn't distress yourself about the engagement," defiantly.

"That is, you wish it broken, do you?" he asked, with a sinking heart.

"I may as well be candid with you. I do wish it broken."

"Do you not care for me any more, Elnora?" in a quavering voice.

"I have changed my mind."

"Are all my hopes to be dashed to the ground in this way? Elnora, think again."

"I have thought it over, and I tell you, I have changed my mind."

"Oh, you faithless, heartless girl!" he broke out. "You have taken a whim for that rascally young doctor, have you? A perfect stranger, too; and you throw away one whom you have known from childhood for him. So be it, then! But remember, girl, you will rue it some day. I do not threaten you, for I shall not cross your path again, but shall tear you, false and fickle girl that you are, from my heart; but I prophesy that you will sometime regret the step you have taken. I can read that doctor through to the core, and I tell you that his fine, smooth ways are only a cover for the unsoundness within. Good-night and good-bye, Elnora."

He held her hand a moment, and then turned from her and strode rapidly and heavily down the walk, leaped into the

sleigh, and dashed with impetuous speed over the hills and up the valley until he reached his home. Scarcely knowing what he was doing, he had lashed his poor horse into a frenzy of fright, and the animal's flanks were foaming with lather as he unharnessed him for the night. Elnora's defection was a crushing blow. It seemed like giving up life itself to give her up, for the prospect of going through life with her by his side had made the young man's heart bright and happy during the past few years. He had always cared for her, even when they had played together as children in the schoolyard; and as he grew older, his love had become intensified, and was made strong by all the firm, unchanging elements of his character. And now to think she had cast him off for a stranger! Is it any wonder that he went about his work in a dull, mechanical way? When he thought of Elnora, whom he had so long regarded as his own, accepting the attentions and receiving the caresses of another man, it almost rived his soul in two.

"She thinks him a professional man, sweet and educated," he said to himself, bitterly, "while I am only an ignorant farmer. But she will be sorry some day. Her doctor is not genuine, for all his dandified ways."

CHAPTER III.

THE news that Elnora Bateman had jilted Phil Flemming, and had accepted the addresses of Dr. Westupton soon spread over the village and surrounding country, and became, metaphorically, a rich viand for the gossip-mongers, which added further to the chagrin of the rejected lover.

But Phil was a philosopher. After the first pangs of his grief and disappointment had somewhat spent themselves, he began to think more rationally of his rejection. Only a very fickle and shallow nature, he reflected, would have been guilty of such disloyalty to an old love, and become fascinated by the chivalrous ways of a stranger, concerning whose character she knew nothing.

"If she is so capricious and unstable, I am glad I made the discovery in time. A girl of such a whimsical disposition could not have made me a good wife or a happy home. Better a brief period of unhappiness

than a whole life filled with vain regrets. No, I shall not break my heart on account of Elnora Bateman."

This speech indicated the sturdiness of his manhood. At first his grief was very poignant, but he concluded to bear it with all the fortitude he could command, believing that after a time the keen edge of disappointment would wear off, and leave him in tranquil possession of his heart. Had she been a true and constant girl, and her accepted lover a man of established character, he might have broken his heart over her rejection of his suit; but, as it was, he lost his respect for her, and when respect was gone, love could no longer flourish. He had always been an admirer of high moral principles, and prided himself on the faithfulness with which he kept every promise; and hence Elnora, by capriciously breaking vows that to him were sacred and binding, had chosen the surest road to the forfeiture of his esteem. No, he would not allow his life to be blighted by a woman with such flaccid fiber in her character.

After he had formed this resolution, his accustomed vivacity gradually returned, and the soreness of his heart was becoming healed by degrees, so that he could see Elnora in the young physician's company with very little disquietude. And believing that the best palliative for the wounds of disappointed love was to find a worthy object of his affections, he kept a sharp but fastidious eye on the girls he met, with the expectation of discovering one who would be "as true as steel," as he phrased it, and whom he might hope to woo and win.

He believed that such a woman could be found, for he was too much of a philosopher to become a cynic and a "woman hater" merely because one fickle girl had trifled with his affections. It was not many months before his secret quest was crowned with success, and so one Sunday afternoon—it was in the following month of May—he harnessed his favorite bay horse to his carriage, and soon the well-varnished wheels were glittering in the rays of the sun, as they went humming over the hills and along the pleasant valleys on their master's errand to the home of a well-to-do farmer, whose broad acres lay to the west about seven miles.

As he drove along, whistling a favorite tune, there was a calm and contented feeling in his heart. How sweet were the melo-

dies of nature that afternoon, as each musical note struck a responsive chord in his heart! As he followed the flexuous course of some narrow valley, with its limpid stream babbling over the rocks, he might have sung, had he been familiar with poetry—and it might have helped him to interpret all these melodious voices of nature:—

" 'Tis love creates their melody, and all
This waste of music is the voice of love."

Indeed, he felt so that evening, and as he drove homeward, listening to the same songs, he felt still more intensely that every voice told him a story of love, pure, ingenuous and true. His soliloquy ran in this wise:—

"She is the most beautiful girl I ever met, and I know she is good and pure. I believe that I can really care for Allie Dunlap in time."

Nor was this his last drive on the same errand, and every time he returned his heart was filled with a tenderer, sweeter sanctity than before. His affection for Allie was not so wild and uncontrollable as that he had felt for Elnora, but it afforded him a sweeter restfulness and contentment, and grew in ardency day by day.

CHAPTER IV.

FOR several months Elnora Bateman's head was held imperiously. In her own mind she had scored a decisive victory over all the village belles in having captured the handsome and dashing young doctor, and she took no pains to hide her exultation. But pride always goes before a fall, and those that exalt themselves are sure to be abased. After a time Elnora began to carry her head less superciliously, and her cheeks grew pale and sunken, while a hectic flush would frequently suffuse them. Her change of demeanor did not escape the observant eye of Phil Flemming. Some secret trouble was evidently preying on her mind which she could not conceal, and several times he thought she looked at him with a wistful, beseeching expression, as if he in some way were connected with her disquietude. What could it be? There was no vindictiveness in his nature, and from his heart he pitied the poor, suffering girl. Yet he knew that the pity he felt was not the passion of love; it was too late for that.

Time only seemed to add to the sorrow

that was weighing down the girl, as Phil could see from the fact that her cheeks were constantly growing thinner and paler. "Why, it is eating out her life like a cancer," he said to himself. "I wonder whether my prophecy about her gallant lover is coming to fulfillment already."

Not only was there a secret agony oppressing Elnora, but it seemed to Phil that some terror was continually haunting her, for at times her face wore a wild and frightened expression. He saw her quite frequently at the rural gatherings, and every time he met her his anxiety for her was increased.

In an old country church, on a wooded hill about a mile from Phil's farm, he encountered her almost every Sabbath, for here both of them were regular attendants. One Sunday evening during the harvest months Phil went across the hill to the church. As his team had been more than usually taxed during the week, he decided to walk. The attendance at the service was very small that evening. Phil, always on the alert, noticed that Elnora was present, her cheeks wearing an almost death-like pallor in the dimly-lighted room.

After the services Phil lingered in the church talking with some friends, and when he was about to leave he noticed, to his surprise, that Elnora had also tarried. He stood at the door a moment and looked at her. That same wistful expression that he had noticed so often of late was in her eyes as she bent them upon him. She hesitated a moment, as if a struggle were going on within her, and then came up to him; and while the blood mounted to her cheeks, she said:—

"Excuse me for troubling you, Mr. Fleming, but through no fault of my own I am entirely alone this evening. It happens that no one beside myself has come from my way to the service, and my courage fails me to go home alone on so dark a night. I supposed when I left home that father would be here to accompany me back."

She spoke timidly, and hesitated in choosing her words, obviously fearing that he would regard her conduct as unmaidenly. Phil said at once that he would accompany her home. She said "Thank you," in a voice that sounded husky to Phil, and took his proffered arm.

As they pursued their way down the hill both were silent, but Phil noticed that the girl's hand trembled, and that she leaned

heavily upon his arm, as if she were unable to sustain her own weight. He became uneasy about her.

"Elnora, I fear you are ill; you tremble so," he said, presently, breaking the silence.

"I am not well," she answered, "nor have I been for several weeks; I fear my health is giving way."

Then there was silence again. The relations that they had previously sustained toward each other made the situation an embarrassing one, and as a consequence their conversation dragged heavily. It was a few minutes before either spoke, and then, by an effort that Phil could see was painful to the girl, she said:—

"Perhaps you wonder what has been the cause of my ill health, for, as you know, a few months ago I did not know what sickness and pain were."

"Yes," he answered, doubtful of the propriety of his words, "I have been very much puzzled of late by your pale cheeks."

"Do you care to know, Phil?" she said, looking at him, though it was too dark to see the expression on his face.

He scarcely knew what reply to make. The situation perplexed him. What right had they to exchange confidences, and what good would it do? Still he answered, "If I can be of any help to you, I shall be glad to know."

"If you cannot help me, there is no one who can," she broke out impulsively; then, as if in despair, she spoke, with recklessness as to the maidenly propriety of her words, "Phil, you have been treating me so coldly and scornfully."

"Can you expect me to act differently after?"—he began, and stopped in embarrassment.

"No; but it breaks my heart," and the poor girl burst into tears.

"Why, Elnora, what is wrong? What can I do to comfort you?"

Her tears broke out afresh, and it was some minutes before she could control herself sufficiently to speak.

"Phil, I did not intend to mention my troubles to you," she began, in a broken voice. "Indeed, I never thought of meeting you this evening; but now that we are together, I feel that my heart will break if I do not unburden it to you. I have no one to whom I can intrust my secret, and yet I need help. Will you think me unmaidenly if I speak frankly?"

"No, no; do not hesitate on that account."

"It is about Dr. Westupton," she said, and looked up at Phil with a face that he could see, even in the darkness, was of a ghostlike whiteness.

"Well," he said, encouragingly.

"The fact is, Phil, I am afraid of him."

"Afraid of him," he echoed, in astonishment.

"Yes. There is something about him that I cannot understand, and sometimes I am terrified by certain expressions he lets drop, and by the looks that accompany them. I believe he is capable of almost any desperate deed. He has forfeited my respect, and I cannot trust him any more. O Phil, I do not know what to do!"

Phil was surprised by the girl's disclosures, and yet he had suspected something of the kind, for he had felt intuitively that Dr. Westupton was a "wolf in sheep's clothing." He sympathized with the poor girl, but still it seemed to him that it would not be so difficult for her to extricate herself from her embarrassments; so he said:—

"Are you engaged to him?"

"Yes," she answered, with a shudder.

"Why do you not break the engagement at once, and be done with the rascal?" asked Phil, his anger rising as he thought of the hypocritical doctor.

"How can I tell you, Phil?" she said, her tears flowing again. "You will think me wanting in womanly modesty. But I will explain. He has threatened to circulate a scandalous report against my character; though, as God is my judge, there is no basis for such a report."

"The scoundrel!" broke out Phil. "But what can I do to help you out of your difficulty?"

"That is what I want to tell you. I believe he is afraid of you, in spite of the bravado he showed when you met him that night; and you could"—she faltered.

"You mean I could cow him by threatening him with brute force if he opened his vilifying mouth?"

"You don't like to do that, do you? Of course I do not want you to come to blows, but you could give him to understand that you will protect me from insult and scandal."

"I will do it," said Phil, resolutely.

"O Phil, how kind and brave you are! I do not deserve this of you," she said, in a

low, husky voice. Then, as if sudden recollections and regrets had come back to her with overpowering force, her bosom heaved with emotion, and she broke out, almost hysterically, "Oh, if I had not been so foolish and fickle, all this trouble might have been avoided! I would give everything I have to be able to recall the happy past!" Then, with reckless abandonment, "Oh, if I could only undo what I have done!"

Phil trembled with excitement. He knew what she meant by her allusions to the "happy past," and by her desire to rectify the mistakes she had made. It was all borne in on him in a moment, like a revelation, and his heart almost stood still, appalled at the agony that still awaited the girl; for he, too, had a secret to impart to her. Her last expression made it necessary. However much it would pain her, he must make the disclosure, or perhaps the poor girl might continue to indulge futile hopes. It required courage to speak, and he trembled before the task; but he determined to perform his plain duty.

"Elnora, what you have just said makes it necessary for me to be as frank with you as you have been with me. I have a secret that you must know now, or your sorrows will be multiplied many times."

"What do you mean?" she asked, in alarm.

"Once I cared for you, Elnora, and asked you to be mine, but—but"—

"But what?" asked the girl, breathlessly.

"You cast me off for a stranger!"—

"O Phil, I have been sorry a thousand times!"

"Listen, Elnora," he said, summoning up all his courage. "When you rejected me so mercilessly I tore you from my heart, and now I am bound to another."

"Bound to?"—she said, in a husky whisper.

"Yes; I have asked Allie Dunlap to be my wife, and she has consented."

"O God, have mercy on me!" cried the girl, putting her hand to her heart, and sinking to the ground.

He threw his arms about her, and lifted her to her feet. In a paroxysm of despairing agony, scarcely realizing what she was doing, she flung her arms about his neck, and printed hot, burning kisses upon his lips, murmuring, "O Phil, I never knew how much I loved you until I lost you!"

Suddenly, as if recollecting herself, she

released him from her embrace, saying: "Forgive me, Phil. I was wild with grief and despair. What right have I to kiss a man who is engaged to another woman!"

She turned away from him, sobbing as if her heart were broken. He tried to soothe her agony as best he could, begging of her to forget him and be of good courage; the poignancy of the grief would soon wear away, and life would become bright again. All of which well-intended words of condolence only added fuel to the flame already consuming away her life. Presently, however, she regained possession of herself sufficiently to resume their journey, which they now pursued in silence. Just then they heard footsteps approaching; the person, whoever he was, seemed to be walking very rapidly. As he came near, the pale light of the moon, which was now rising in the east, fell upon his features.

"It is Westupton!" whispered Elnora, terror-stricken, clinging nervously to Phil's arm. "What shall I do?"

"Never mind; I will take care of the medical villain," answered Phil.

The next moment the young doctor confronted them, with a face livid with rage. He at once broke out in a rough, angry voice:—

"Elnora, is that you? What do you mean, to run away and play truant when you know I am coming to see you?"

"I did not know you were coming to-night," said the trembling girl.

"You might have known, had you thought or cared; but I believe you ran away intentionally. Who is this with you?" he asked, coming up close to Phil. "Ah, I see! You came out to have an interview with this verdant clod-pate, did you? So you are hankering for his rustic society again, are you? He is so cultivated, so refined; I am sure I admire your taste."

And taking Elnora roughly by the arm, he drew her violently away from Phil. The rude act and the insulting words of the doctor stung Phil to the quick, and were more than his impetuous nature could bear with equanimity.

"Dr. Westupton, I warn you to be careful how you treat this girl, and how you address me," he said, in a constrained voice, stepping forward, with a menacing gesture.

"You insolent country cur! Do you dare to interfere with me?" shouted the enraged doctor. "There! take that for your imper-

tinence!" and with the palm of his hand he struck Phil a stinging blow in the face.

It was too much. Phil's anger got beyond his control. Springing forward with the ferocity of a wild beast, and clutching his antagonist by the throat, he hurled him with such terrible violence to the ground that he rolled over in the dust a number of times before the momentum of his fall was overcome. Phil, in his blind rage, was about to spring upon the prostrate man, when with a violent effort he controlled himself, and going to the doctor, who had not yet been able to rise, he commanded him to get up. Before Westupton rose, he begged of Phil to use no more violence. The young farmer laughed a contemptuous laugh, and promised to refrain from pommeling him as he deserved. Dr. Westupton presented a sorry looking spectacle, as he stood trembling before them, covered with dust, while his silk hat, over which he had rolled several times, had lost all its beautiful rotundity. The gallant dispenser of drugs had not suspected this young "clod-pate," as he called him, capable of such a terrific onslaught.

"Dr. Westupton," said Phil, commandingly, "you may walk directly in front of us while I conduct this young lady home. I cannot trust her with you."

"And now, sir," commanded Phil, when they had reached the gate, where the doctor's horse and carriage were standing, "you may get into your vehicle there and take yourself off. Do not lose any time, sir," said Phil, as the other hesitated. "You are ready, are you? Before you go," he continued, holding the horse's rein, "I have a word of parting counsel to give you. Remember, if ever you insult this girl, or scandalize her character, you will have to answer for it to me; and I think, sir, if you will learn wisdom from your experience to-night, you know what that means. You may go." And he started the trembling young physician on his way.

Turning to Elnora, he took her hand and said, kindly, "I do not think you need to fear him now. Good-night"; and he was gone.

CHAPTER V.

A LITTLE more than a week elapsed, during which time Phil heard no tidings of Elnora. One evening he drove to the mill, about a mile and a half down the

valley. As he came near the mill, which was located at the intersection of the valley with the larger creek-bottom, he observed that the stream had been swollen to a wild, raging torrent by the heavy rain-fall of the few preceding days. Fortunately for Phil, the mill stood on the near side of the creek on the high bank, so that he was not necessitated to cross it. Below the mill a short distance, a covered, wooden bridge spanned the main channel of the stream. Beyond this structure a low stretch of meadow land, now completely inundated with a sheet of murky water, extended to the hills beyond the valley. Although the road running from the bridge across the low-lying land had been thrown up to a considerable height, it was now completely overflowed, and at places the current was very rapid.

Phil had exchanged a few remarks with the miller concerning the high water, when the loud clatter of horse's hoofs fell upon their ears, and in a few moments a horseman came galloping down the highway.

"There comes Dr. Westupton," exclaimed the miller, "ridin' at a furious pace. I wonder who is sick."

As the main road did not lay directly past the mill, but made a sharp detour to the left toward the bridge, the doctor wheeled swiftly around the turn, not noticing the miller and Phil watching him several rods distant. When the horseman saw the wide, turbulent flood that deluged the bottom, he reined in his horse suddenly, and looked around him undecidedly, while his face became white as a sheet.

"Who's sick, Doc.?" hallooed the miller.

Again the physician looked around anxiously and nervously, as if he feared pursuit, a hunted, terror-stricken expression on his ghostlike face. Finally he shouted back to the miller, in a hoarse voice: "Mrs. Wiggard is at the point of death, and I must cross that stream somehow."

Digging the rowels into the steed's side, he urged him forward at headlong speed through the bridge and into the water beyond it. The two spectators rushed to the opposite end of the bridge and watched the foolhardy adventurer as he urged his horse forward. He succeeded in making his way to the centre of the valley without mishap. At that point there was somewhat of a depression in the road, and as a consequence the water was very deep and the current exceedingly rapid.

"His horse is swimming now," remarked Phil, breathlessly. "See! the current is sweeping him down into the deep water! Good heavens! he is below the road now. I am afraid he is a lost man."

The mad, rushing waters were bearing their helpless victims, horse and rider, on to certain destruction. The poor animal struggled bravely and frantically, but the force of the stream was too great, and rendered all his efforts unavailing. They were being carried rapidly to the whirlpool formed by the meeting of the tributary current with the main current of the river. The spectators stood with transfixed eyes, watching the terrible tragedy. As he neared the seething whirlpool, Phil noticed that the doctor held out his hand imploringly. At last the revolving currents seized their victims, and tossed them around as if they had been feathers with a fearful velocity; and then, with a wild shriek from the rider's lips, which echoed across the valley, he and his faithful horse were drawn down into the watery vortex.

As the two men on the bridge stood speechless, unable to realize the fatal conclusion of the tragedy, the sheriff of the county, with a couple other officers, came galloping up to them, reining in their horses as they reached the place where Phil and his companion stood.

"Have you seen Dr. Westupton pass this way?" inquired the sheriff.

Phil told the officer what he had just witnessed.

"What! drowned?" exclaimed the sheriff. "Well, the water has served us a good turn, then; it has saved us the trouble of arresting one of the greatest rascals that ever walked."

"Why, were you going to arrest him?" asked Phil, in bewilderment.

"Yes; he stole four hundred dollars from Farmer Bateman while he was courting his daughter, and it was done so slyly, and his tracks were so skillfully covered up, that we got a clew only by an accident. Ah! he's a shrewd and practiced villain, I tell you. Besides, proof has just come to hand that he has a wife in Kansas, while he was passing himself off for an unmarried man in this section. He was a regular desperado. We had made complete arrangements to nab him, but somehow he got wind of it, and, as you see, tried to escape. We must now make an effort to find his body."

A few days later the body of the unfortunate doctor was recovered, and the four hundred dollars were restored to their rightful owner without material damage.

Poor Elnora Bateman could not bear up under the accumulated burdens of sorrow, disappointment and shame. When the news of her unworthy suitor's theft and base deception reached her, the shock was more than her enfeebled strength could endure, and she was thrown into a violent fever; and though in a few weeks she be-

came partially convalescent, her health was left in a critical condition. It was evident that she could not last long. When she saw that she had lost her noble and honorable lover, Phil Flemming, and when word was brought to her that he was soon to be married, she gradually wasted away.

"Ah, if I had not been so foolish and fickle, I might be happy now in a true man's love!" were among the last words she uttered. The first feathery snowflakes of winter fell on her new-made grave.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

PEAT.

A MORE delightful kind of fuel than peat has not yet been discovered. No doubt there are various kinds of peat—good, bad and indifferent. But the best kind of peat is mild, cleanly and in every way useful and pleasant. To those who have been used to peat fuel a coal fire appears insufficient and insignificant. Coal fires are much too expensive to keep up in the Highland fashion. Whatever else may be costly in portions of the Highlands of Scotland, fuel is cheap; almost as cheap as the air that is breathed there or the water—which is also of the best quality—that is drunk.

Peat is found to a depth of over twelve feet. Trunks of fir trees are frequently discovered in it, several feet from the surface. The fir is generally in a good state of preservation and richly laden with rosin. Indeed, when cut up and dried, moss fir, as it is called, is sometimes used by the poorer people instead of candles. The matter of which peat is formed in Scotland is mostly of a mossy character. Three or four different kinds of peat, one above the other, are often taken out of the same bank. The first cut or layer is usually of a light or dark brown color, the second is still darker, and the third or fourth is almost black, and, as it were, of a fatty substance. In the first and second peats, moss and grass, sometimes running from end to end, are distinctly visible; but in the third or fourth the whole

is clotted together in a decomposed mass, so that all traces of vegetation are merged in a black composition of the consistence of butter. All the peats make good fuel, but the latter is the best. After being thoroughly dried it burns with a great brilliancy, lighting up a room in such a way as to render any other artificial light unnecessary in winter nights.

Peat cutting, implements for which are specially made, is commenced about the beginning of May. The turf or crust is first stripped off in three or four stripes of varying thickness with a shovel-like implement which is struck forward from above the knee in a slanting position. This is the hardest part of the work, and calls for some technical skill. Then the substance is sliced out by the peat cutter with an implement locally termed a tusk. Two persons, male or female, accompany the cutter, taking the peat from him as it is cut and spreading it at full length on the ground. Three persons are therefore engaged to one spade or tusk; but seven or eight spades will cut sufficient peats in one day to serve the uses of a family for a whole year. Peat-cutting day is generally associated with good fellowship and festivity. The head of the family issues invitations to those of his neighbors who are known to have an aptitude for such work, and on the morning of the day appointed the house is filled with young men and women, together with some old ones,

blithely ready to do him the required services. The day's operations are begun with breakfast—a repast which would not disgrace a wedding. There is plenty of whiskey, of course; a peat cutting without whiskey would never prosper. After appropriate toasts have been duly honored the party starts for the peat moss, where the work is begun by the young people more in the spirit of play than of labor, and carried on with hearty good will. At midday there is an interval for lunch, which is eaten on the heathery hillside in picnic fashion, and a great deal of fun goes on meanwhile. Work is then resumed, often with the result that the year's peats are cut before five o'clock in the afternoon; and then the party marches back to another hospitable meal. No payment is given or expected; only it is understood that each family engaged will help the other in similar circumstances. An individual here and there will cut his peats himself, working at them day after day until he has obtained the requisite quantity, but the peat cutting party system is more popular.

In about a month after the peats have

been cut they are dry enough, in ordinary weather, to be put up on end in small heaps. In a short time afterward two of these may be made into one; and the fuel is generally carted home toward the end of July or the beginning of August. When taken home the peats are built into a stack. The stack is built straight up for a few feet and then gradually tapers to the top, a height of ten or twelve feet from the base. The peat is taken into the house in small quantities, as it is required for daily or weekly consumption. Coal is not found in the Highlands of Scotland, except in the county of Sutherland, where the ducal proprietor spent large sums in opening up the coal fields at Brora; but the quality of the mineral, though good enough for some purposes, is poor. Peat holds sway everywhere in the rural districts, where householders are not troubled with coal bills or water rates. The privilege of peat cutting is extended to every crofter along with his house and piece of land. Even the outdoor pauper has peat ground allotted to him; and whatever his poverty may be, no one in the Highlands need be without a blazing fire in the winter months.

OUR YOUNG FOLKS' STORY-TELLER.

POLL'S THANKSGIVING.

BY LOUISE DUFEY.

LONG ago it was time that Lizette had put on her nightcap and crept into bed; but instead of doing that, she put on her wishing-cap, and sat down before the fire. Her poor sick mother was sleeping quietly, and her two rosy brothers were nestled together in their snug, warm nest, their dreams full of Thanksgiving delights, Lizette knew, because they had been talking and smiling in their sleep. Poor little souls! she was afraid that Thanksgiving day would prove a terrible disappointment to them, after all, and they had been looking forward so long to the fine dinner they were to have then—the pudding, full of plums, the spicy mince pies, and above all, the great smok-

ing turkey, with the gravy streaming over its crisp, brown sides! It was coming to-morrow, and there were no pies in the house, and nothing to make them of; a pudding was out of the question, too; and as for a turkey, unless one should stray from one of the neighboring farmyards and pop himself into their oven of his own accord (and it was not at all likely that any one of these meek gobblers would make such a sacrifice of itself on the Thanksgiving altar), there was no hope of seeing one on their table. There were potatoes in the cellar, but no flour in the barrel, and only the least bit of meal. The shelves in the cupboard were as bare as "Mother Hub-

bard's," and Lizette's purse had only two bright five-cent pieces in it. Next week, when the embroidery she was doing for a city shop would be done, she should have a good deal of money, for *her*; but now there was no way she could think of to obtain any. She should have sat up all night to finish her work if that would have done any good; but her employers had engaged it for next week; they did not wish it before.

All that time, around her there were great farm-houses full of Thanksgiving stir and bustle, and over-flowing with plenty. She could see the ruddy fire-light shining in their kitchens now, though it was so late; and in one house, where the curtains were undrawn, a servant girl filling the great red-mouthed brick oven with Thanksgiving pies.

"If we only had an oven like that, full of savory dainties," she thought, "how pleased the boys would be! To think of there being such plenty all around, and we almost starving! My poor little boys! not even a bit of a cake for their greedy little mouths!"

She was not aware that she was thinking aloud, until the parrot, who had been sitting silently and meditatively on her perch over Lizette's head, took up the strain.

"Oh," repeated she, drawing a long, doleful sigh, "to think of there being such plenty all around us, and we almost starving! My poor little boys! not even a bit of cake for their greedy little mouths!"

"Be still, Poll!" said she, half angrily. "Be still, and go to sleep! It's most midnight."

But Poll had no idea of obeying her, and kept repeating her lament, over and over again. After a little while, though, Lizette was too deep in thought to heed her, and again she forgot herself, and spoke aloud:—

"I don't care so much for myself, but if I only had something for the boys! They'll be so disappointed, poor things! Oh, how dreadful it is to be so poor!"

Poll seized upon this, also, and repeated it, over and over again, ending each time with a deeply-drawn sigh, as Lizette had done.

"Dear me!" said Lizette, "who could hardly help laughing at her dolorous tone. What a provoking bird! If any one should come in now, she'd commence at the beginning and repeat every word I've said. It's fortunate that her talkative moods are not frequent; if they were, I don't know what I should do with her."

Poll looked disgusted, but she did not deign to repeat this; and after proclaiming that it was bedtime, in the loudest of tones, she tucked her head under her wing and went to sleep.

The fire died away and left only a few bright coals, and the mice, believing that they should have the kitchen to themselves, now it was so still, stole out of their holes to find some nice crumbs for *their* Thanksgiving. Lizette's fingers were growing numb with the cold, and lighting her candle, she covered the glowing coals with ashes, that they might keep alive until morning, and crept softly up-stairs to bed. But she had her wishing-cap on, still; and just as she was closing the door, she said—for she had a habit of thinking aloud:—

"Oh, if I could manage to get even a plum-pudding for the boys! But it's no use to wish. I can do nothing more than I have done." And to her surprise, she heard her words faintly and brokenly echoed.

Poll was awake again, or half awake, certainly, though she spoke as a person speaks in sleep. But she kept it up until Lizette had closed the door of her room, saying it over and over, as if it were something she wished to remember.

"Now," said Lizette to herself, in a vexed tone, "she'll remember all that to-morrow, and if she feels at all like talking she'll keep repeating what she has heard me say all the day long; and if any one should happen to come in, it would be so embarrassing! But then it isn't likely that any one will come in, for we are strangers here." And drawing a deep sigh, she crept into bed, forgetting the impudence of Poll in a heap of other sad meditations.

It was late the next morning when she awoke. The merry sunshine, laughing in her face, caused her to open her eyes in the midst of a happy dream. But her trouble came back to her in a moment. The first sound that greeted her was the voice of Poll, at an unusually high pitch, and mingled with it the gay, delighted laughter of the boys.

"I wonder what pleases them so, poor little fellows!" she said to herself. But hurrying down-stairs, she soon learned the cause of their joy.

On the window seat, but not within her cage, sat Poll, repeating over and over again the words she had stolen from her the night before, and on the floor beneath her were

two great baskets, laden with Thanksgiving dainties. The yellow legs of a great turkey protruded from one of them; then there were great red-cheeked apples, and delicate, crisp celery stalks, and a little jar of dainty preserved sweetmeats. In the other was a great loaf of rich-looking fruit cake, some snow-white, home-made bread, a pat of golden butter, two or three tempting pies, and a veritable Thanksgiving pudding, its brown crust bursting, to show the richness inside.

"See," said Will, "Poll's been away somewhere, and when I got up, I found her sitting in the entry, with these baskets by her side! You must have forgotten to fasten the door last night, and it blew open, else how could she have got out?"

"Why, how do you know she's been out?" said Lizette, in amazement, "and where did these baskets come from?"

"Oh, I know she's been out, because her feet were all muddy; but I don't know where the baskets came from. Perhaps Santa Claus found out how poor we were, and sent them to us, though it's not Christmas eve. Won't we have a jolly dinner!" And both boys danced about the baskets, smacking their lips in great glee, as if they were already tasting the savory Thanksgiving fare.

"But they can't be for us," said Lizette. "There must be some mistake."

"Oh yes they are," said Will. "Don't you see your name on the basket?"

And sure enough, there was a little slip of paper pinned to the cover of the basket, on which was written, "For Miss Linden, from a friend."

"Ah," said Poll, drawing the doleful sigh of last night, "my poor little boys! not even a bit of cake for their greedy little mouths!"

The bewildered look on Lizette's face grew less.

"Ah Poll, it must be your work. You have been to some of the neighbors, talking in that strain, and they have taken pity on us. Poor Poll! I never set great store by you, but you have done a good deed for once in your life; though it is humiliating enough to have even a bird go begging for you." And seizing the chattering parrot, she gave her a little hug, her tears dropping on her glossy green coat.

Poll looked amazed, and began to beg clamorously for a lump of sugar, and after she had obtained and devoured the sweet

morsel, called herself "pretty Poll" until she was perfectly unendurable.

A long, long time afterwards they found out who their benefactor was, and how he happened to send them a Thanksgiving dinner. As Lizette suspected, Poll was the cause of it all. He was their next door neighbor, a rich old bachelor, and very early that morning, while he was standing in his door, Poll appeared on the scene. She was always very talkative to strangers, and had been in an unusually talkative mood for a day or two. So as soon as she saw him she began to say over everything she could think of, and Lizette's complaints seemed to be uppermost in her mind. She repeated them over and over again, in the most affecting manner, bringing the sighs in the right place; and such sighs as they were—so deeply-drawn and pathetic! Mr. Tracy (for that was the gentleman's name) recognized her at once as the one he had noticed in the windows of the brown cottage; and, somehow, he was greatly interested in the inmates of that cottage, though they were strangers to him; and perhaps he had suspected before his interview with Poll that they were in want. Anyway, it would do no harm to send them a Thanksgiving present; they would never know where it came from. So he prepared the baskets of provisions at once, and sent a servant to accompany them and Miss Poll to the cottage before the family should be up.

Poll escaped from her cage and made him two or three calls after that; but her conversation on these occasions was of a more cheerful character than on her first. And after a while, Mr. Tracy returned her neighborly visits.

But the strangest part of the story is that Mr. Tracy proved to be an old lover of Mrs. Linden. They were engaged to be married once, and then there was some misunderstanding between them, and she married Mr. Linden; but he had remained single all these years for her sake. His faithfulness was rewarded at last, however; for Mrs. Linden had been many years a widow, and was quite ready to say "yes" when he again asked her to become his wife. They all live together in the pleasant house, now; and Poll is as talkative as ever, though she never repeats any more such sorrowful sayings from Lizette's lips, nor is obliged to go begging for a Thanksgiving dinner for the family.

THE HOUSEKEEPER.

ICE-CREAM CANDY.—Two cups of sugar, half a cup of water; when boiling, add a teaspoonful of cream tartar, dissolved in a little water; boil ten minutes without stirring; then add a small piece of butter, and boil till it will harden in water; then flavor and pull.

ICE-CREAM CAKE.—One cup of butter, one and one-half cups of sugar, two cups of flour, one-half cup of milk, whites of five eggs, two level teaspoonfuls of baking powder; add half a teaspoonful of vanilla extract; beat it very little after the flour is worked in, as too much beating makes it tough. Bake twenty-five minutes in a moderate oven.

GRAHAM MUFFINS.—Two cups of sour milk, one teaspoonful soda, two teaspoonfuls sugar, a little salt, and graham flour to make a moderately stiff batter; add the soda to the milk, and beat for a few minutes before adding the other ingredients. Bake in hot, greased gem tins.

MEAT AND POTATO PIE.—Chop any kind of cold meat very fine, season highly, and moisten with butter and hot water, or meat gravy, if any; put this in a dish, and cover with mashed and seasoned potato; spread over the top a well-beaten egg, and bake half an hour.

DRESSED CELERY.—Use only the white, crisp part of the celery. Scrape off all the discolored part and wash thoroughly, and let stand in cold water half an hour; then cut in thin slices, and moisten with salad dressing; garnish with lettuce or celery leaves and thin slices of tomato.

VEAL CROQUETTES.—One pound of veal, chop fine; add one pound of powdered bread and cracker crumbs; season with salt, pepper, and a little celery salt; mix in two eggs, roll into ball, dip in dry cracker crumbs, and fry brown.

BEEF OMELET, which may be eaten cold for supper, or warm for breakfast, is made of one pound of beefsteak, one-quarter of a pound of suet, salt, pepper, and a very little sifted sage, one egg, and three milk crackers; chop the beef and the suet very fine, roll the crackers to a powder, mix all together, and bake in a shallow tin, or fry in butter over a slow fire.

SOFT GINGERBREAD.—One cup molasses, one cup butter, one cup sweet milk, four cups flour, four eggs, one tablespoonful ginger, one small teaspoonful soda dissolved in milk. Beat the molasses, butter, sugar and spice to a cream;

whip in the beaten yolks, the milk, and lastly the whites, alternating with the flour. Bake in two loaves.

TO BAKE A LEG OF MUTTON.—Take a leg of mutton weighing six or eight pounds; have the bone removed, and fill the cavity with a dressing made of four ounces of suet, two eggs, two ounces of chopped ham, six ounces of stale bread, one onion, a little sweet marjoram, nutmeg, salt and pepper; sew up, lay in a pan, add a teacup of water, and put in a hot oven; baste frequently, and bake three hours.

PRESERVED APPLES.—Pare and core twelve large apples; cut each into eighths; make a syrup of one pound of sugar and one-half pint of water, and boil; put in as much apple as can be cooked without breaking; remove them carefully when tender; after all are done add to the liquid one cup of sugar, and boil ten minutes slowly; flavor with lemon and pour over the apples, or grate nutmeg on them instead.

APPLE JELLY.—Take half a peck of juicy, tart apples, quarter and core, but do not pare them; put into a kettle with two lemons cut up with them, and cover well with water. Let them cook until reduced to pulp, when strain through a flannel bag. To every tumbler of juice add two-thirds of a tumbler of white sugar. Boil hard for twenty minutes; put in glasses and cover next day, using brandied paper next the jelly, and covering the glasses with paper wet with flour paste.

NEWARK PUDDING.—One pint of boiled milk, one cupful of soft bread crumbs, and one tablespoonful of butter. When this becomes cool, add the yolks of three eggs, one cupful of sugar, the juice of one lemon; turn into the dish for serving, and bake half an hour; cover with a meringue of the whites of the eggs and two tablespoonfuls of sugar. Brown slightly, and serve without sauce.

PRUNE PIE.—Stew half a pound of prunes in a little water until very soft; remove the stones, and add sugar to suit taste, and mash well; beat the yolks of two eggs with half a cupful of milk, and add to the prune pulp. Line a pie plate with crust, and when nearly done fill with the prune and bake twenty minutes. Beat the whites of the two eggs to a stiff froth, adding a little sugar, and spread over the top, and brown delicately.

HOME TOPICS.

COFFEE AS A DISINFECTANT.—Coffee is a handy and harmless disinfectant. Experiments have been made in Paris to prove this. A quantity of meat was hung up in a closed room until decomposed, and then a chafing dish was introduced and five hundred grammes of coffee thrown on the fire. In a few minutes the room was completely disinfected. In another room sulphuretted hydrogen and ammonia were developed, and ninety grammes of coffee destroyed the smell in about half a minute. It is also stated that coffee destroys the smell of musk, castoreum and assafetida. As a proof that the noxious smells are really decomposed by the fumes of coffee, and not merely overpowered by them, it is stated that the first vapors of the coffee were not smelled at all, and are therefore chemically absorbed, while the other smells gradually diminish as the fumigation continues. The best way to effect this fumigation is to pound the coffee in a mortar, and then strew it on a hot iron plate, which, however, must not be red hot.

ECONOMY IN FUEL.—One of the most difficult things to teach girls is economy in fuel. Nothing seems to satisfy but a continual piling on of coal. As soon as a little gas has burned off, a vigorous shaking and raking out of ashes follows, then the stove is filled anew, touching and lifting the covers, which soon become red hot; and the process is repeated from morning till night. Teach her that in order to obtain and secure a good draft the coal ought never to be above the lining.

And in this connection I am reminded of another practice which seems to come to kitchen girls by intuition, or handed down by tradition; that is, to put sad-irons, or flat-irons, as generally called, on the stove, over the hottest fire, hours before use; consequently they are ruined, for if once heated to redness they will ever after retain heat but a short time, and lose their smoothness, too. I would rather lend almost anything else to a neighbor than a flat-iron. In ironing, have two holders to use alternately, thereby lessening the heat of the hand and insuring a greater degree of comfort.

THE FAMILY MEDICINE CHEST.—Every household should possess a medicine chest. It may be a little corner closet, or simply a box, but it should always have a lock and key. It should contain a roll of old linen, some lint, court-plaster, fine, soft sponges, a small glass syringe, a medicine tumbler, lime water, linseed oil, arnica, and as many of the simple remedies as the members of the family know how to ad-

minister. The fact of having these things all together in a spot where they can be found the instant they are wanted will save much valuable time, and considerable pain to the patient.

BARLEY WATER FOR BABIES.—A correspondent informs "the poor mothers whose children are suffering for want of milk, that in France even the children of many rich people are half fed on barley water. It is considered most nourishing, and is recommended by doctors for delicate babies, and considered to be more easily digested than milk. Take a cupful of pearl barley, add three of cold water, and boil till the barley is soft; then strain, and add sugar. The barley itself can be used in broth for the older children, and is all the better for being so thoroughly boiled."

PLEASANT BEDROOMS.—There is nothing more indicative of refinement and a genuine culture in a family than bright, cheerful and tastefully decorated bed-chambers. Tasteful decorations do not necessarily mean expense, and it is possible to make a chamber look very pretty at a very small outlay. Indeed, in many instances, no outlay at all would be required beyond what would be incurred under any circumstances. The women of a family especially are apt to pass a good portion of their time in their bed-chambers, and in some households the sleeping apartments are used alike for sewing-rooms, sitting-rooms and nurseries. It is worth while to obtain all the innocent pleasures we can in this life, and there can be no doubt that life is pleasanter if most of its hours are passed in cheerful looking apartments.

YOU CAN WASH OUT THE CHAMOIS LEATHERS that are apt to get stiff and hard and soiled. Make a solution of weak soda and warm water, rub plenty of soft soap into the leather, and allow it to remain in soak for two hours; then rub it well in until it is quite clean. Afterwards rinse it well in a weak solution composed of warm water, soda and yellow soap. It must not be rinsed in water only, for then it would be so hard when dry as to be unfit for use. It is the small quantity of soap left in the leather that allows the finer particles of the leather to separate and become soft, like silk. After rinsing, wring it well in a rough towel, and dry quickly; then pull it about and brush it well, and it will become softer and better than most new leathers. In using a rough chamols to touch up highly polished silver, it is frequently observed to scratch the work; this is caused by particles of dust, and even hard powder, that are left in the leather, and must be got out.

CURIOUS AND OTHER MATTERS.

FAMILIAR EXPRESSIONS THAT ARE GENERALLY QUOTED WRONG.

It is a peculiar faculty of human memory to misquote proverbs and poetry, and almost invariably to place the credit where it does not belong.

Nine men out of ten think that "The Lord tempers the wind to the shorn lamb" is from the Bible, whereas Lawrence Sterne is the author. "Pouring oil upon the troubled waters" is also ascribed to the sacred volume, whereas it is not there; in fact, no one knows its origin.

Again, we hear people say, "The proof of the pudding is in chewing the string." This is arrant nonsense, and the proverb says: "The proof of the pudding is in the eating thereof, and not in chewing the string."

Nothing is more common than to hear,

"A man convinced against his will
Is of the same opinion still."

This is an impossible condition of mind, for no one can be convinced of one opinion, and at the same time hold to an opposite one. What Butler wrote was eminently sensible:—

"He that complies against his will
Is of his own opinion still."

A famous passage of Scripture is often misquoted thus: "He that is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone." It should be: "Let him first cast a stone."

Sometimes we are told: "Behold how great a fire a little matter kindleth"; whereas St. James said: "Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth," which is quite a different thing.

We also hear that "a miss is as good as a mile," which is not as sensible or forcible as the true proverb, "A miss of an inch is as good as a mile."

"Look before you leap" should be "And look before you ere you leap."

Pope is generally credited with having written,

"Immodest words admit of no defence,
For want of decency is want of sense,"

though it would puzzle anyone to find the verses in his writings. They were written by the Earl of Roscommon, who died before Pope was born.

Franklin said, "Honesty is the best policy," but the maxim is of Spanish origin, and may be found in "Don Quixote."

THE CAMPHOR TREE.—One of the most useful and magnificent productions of the vegetable kingdom that enriches China, and more particularly the provinces of Kiang-si and Canton, is the camphor tree. This stupendous laurel, which often adorns the banks of the rivers, was in

several places found by Lord Amherst's embassy above fifty feet high, with its stem twenty feet in circumference. The Chinese themselves affirm that it sometimes attains the height of more than three hundred feet, and a circumference greater than the extended arms of twenty men could embrace. Camphor is obtained from the branches by steeping them, while fresh cut, in water for two or three days, and then boiling them till the gum, in the form of a white jelly, adheres to a stick which is used in constantly stirring the branches. The fluid is then poured into a glazed vessel, where it concretes in a few hours. To purify it the Chinese take a quantity of finely-powdered earth, which they lay at the bottom of a copper basin; over this they place a layer of camphor, and then another layer of earth, and so on until the vessel is nearly filled, the last or topmost layer being of earth. They cover the last layer with the leaves of a plant called po ho, which seems to be a species of mentha (mint). They now invert a second basin over the first, and make it air-tight by luting. The whole is then submitted to the action of a regulated fire for a certain length of time, and then left to cool gradually. On separating the vessels the camphor is found to have sublimed, and to have adhered to the upper basin. Repetitions of the same process complete its refinement. Besides yielding this valuable ingredient, the camphor tree is one of the principal timber trees of China, and is used not only in building, but in most articles of furniture. The wood is dry and of a light color, and although light and easy to work, is durable and not likely to be injured by insects.

SPIDERS' WEBS.—I read a statement in this magazine not long ago about spiders' webs that cover the fields and meadows on certain mornings in the summer, which was not entirely exact. It is not quite true, in the sense in which it was uttered, that these spiders' webs are more abundant on some mornings than on others, and that they presage fair weather. Now the truth is that during the latter half of summer these webs are about as abundant at one time as at another; but they are much more noticeable on some mornings than on others—a heavy dew brings them to view. They are especially conspicuous after a morning of fog, such as often fills our deeper valleys for a few hours when fall approaches. They then look like little napkins spread all over the meadows. I saw fields last summer in August when one could step from one of these dew napkins to another for long distances. They are little nets that catch the fog. Every thread is strung with

innumerable fine drops, like tiny beads. After an hour of sunshine the webs, apparently, are gone.

Most country people, I find, think they are due to nothing but the moisture; others seem to think that the spiders take them in as morning advances. But they are still there, stretched above the grass, at noon and at sunset, as abundant as they were at sunrise; and are then more serviceable to the spiders, because less visible. The flies and insects would avoid them in the morning, but at midday they do not detect them so readily.

If these webs have any significance as signs of the coming weather, this may be the explanation:—

A heavy dew occurs under a clear, cool sky, and the night preceding a day of rain is usually a dewless night. Much dew, then, means fair weather, and a copious dew discloses the spiders' webs. It is the dew that is significant, and not the webs.—*St. Nicholas.*

WOODEN ARTILLERY.—Few narratives of sieges are more entertaining than that given in the *Seir Mutakhereen*, of a fort which was defended by the use of wooden artillery, and defended effectually, in one of Auringzebe's campaigns in the Deccan. The commandant was nearly unprovided with cannon, having only one or two defective pieces. The town, however, was a great mart for timber. The governor, securing both the timber and the carpenters, garnished his ramparts with wooden imitations of cannon; and being fully supplied with most other requisites when the imperial army arrived, put a good face on the business.

He did more, too, for he kept the secret within his own walls; and the enemy, suspecting the number of his train, commenced their approaches in due form, affording him thus abundance of leisure to mature his plan of defence. Every piece, as soon as fired, became, of course, unserviceable, but he immediately replaced it by a new one.

No foundry ever produced more guns in a year than this man's ingenuity did in one siege. The enemy, tired out at last with the obstinate defence which he made from his batteries, determined to carry the place by escalade in open day. Having failed, however, in some similar enterprises, a neighboring saint was procured, who was to head the attack, and by the sanctity of his character, to inspire the soldiers with greater zeal in a desperate cause. The holy man was raised on a platform, and carried in the rear of the forlorn hope.

The governor's good luck still adhered to him.

A shot from a wooden gun, when the escaladers were nearly close to the walls, knocked down the saint, on which the party took to their heels. A delay ensued; the siege was at last raised, and the commandant covered with glory.

A CAPITAL FABLE.—The hopelessness of any one's accomplishing anything without pluck is illustrated by an old East India fable. A mouse that dwelt near the abode of a great magician was kept in such constant distress by its fear of a cat that the magician, taking pity on it, turned it into a cat itself. Immediately it began to suffer from fear of a dog, so the magician turned it into a dog. Then it began to suffer from fear of a tiger, and the magician turned it into a tiger. Then it began to suffer from fear of huntsmen, and the magician, in disgust, said, "Be a mouse again. As you have the heart of a mouse, it is impossible to help you by giving you the body of a noble animal." And the poor creature again became a mouse.

It is the same with a mouse-hearted man. He may be clothed with the powers, and placed in the position of brave men, but he will always act like a mouse; and public opinion is usually the magician that finally says to such a person, "Go back to obscurity again. You have only the heart of a mouse, and it is useless to try to make a lion out of you."

MOURNING COLORS.—In Italy women grieve in white garments and men in brown. In China white is worn by both sexes. In Turkey, Syria, Cappadocia and Armenia celestial blue is the tint chosen. In Egypt yellowish brown, the hue of the dead leaf, is deemed proper, and in Ethiopia, where men are black, gray is the emblem of mourning. All of these colors are symbols. White symbolizes purity, an attribute of our dead; the celestial blue, that place of rest where happy souls are at peace; the yellow, or dead leaf, tells that death is the end of all human hope, and that man falls as the autumn leaf; and gray whispers of the earth to which all return. The Syrians considered mourning for the dead an effeminate practice, and so, when they grieved they put on women's clothes, as a symbol of weakness, and as a shame to them for a lack of manliness. The Thracians made a feast when one of their loved ones died, and every method of joy and delight was employed. This meant that the dead had passed from a state of misery into one of felicity. Black was introduced as mourning by the queen of Charles VIII. of France. Before that the French queens wore white mourning, and were known as "white queens."

RUTHVEN'S PUZZLE PAGE.

Send all communications for this Department to
EDWIN R. BRIGGS, West Bethel, Oxford
County, Maine.

lege. 5. Rants. 6. An insect. 7. The residence
of a bishop. 8. A note in music. 9. A conso-
nant. CYRIL DEANE.

Answers to September Puzzles.

46.—Overcome.

47.—F G A S G E N E T F A N A T I C S E T O N T I N C	48.—C L A G L I L A C C A L A M U S G A M U T C U T S
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49.—T(race)ry.	50.—C(rack)ling.
51.—Co(loss)al.	52.—B(all)oon.

53.—B (light) ed.

54.—P A T A C A A M I L O T T I D B I T A L B I N I C O I N E R A T T I R E	55.—P A T E R A A B A N E T T A S L E T E N L I V E R E E V E S A T T E S T
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56.—Arre(s)t.	57.—Bo(y)ar.
58.—C(l)ause.	59.—D(u)ress.
60.—E(b)on.	61.—Fad(g)e.

62.—Kaleidoscope.

80.—A Charade.

This *primal* was a worn-out horse,
Turned out to die among the gorse,
By cruel-hearted owner, who,
More avaricious than a Jew,
Had ever grudged the scanty feed
Needed to keep life in the steed,
Whose only fault was too much *last*,
Which made his action far from fast;
Above the **WHOLE** in youth was he,
Who now, when old, must worthless be.

MAUDE.

81.—Double Acrostic.

(Words of six letters.)

1. The yak. 2. Inactivity. 3. A genus of
plants. 4. A list of duties on goods exported or
imported. 5. To enrol.

Primals.—Condition.

Finals.—Skill.

Connected.—The art of conducting the affairs
of a body of people under one government.

CAPTAIN POSER.

82.—Right Rhomboid.

Across.—1. A vegetable root. 2. The arch
adversary. 3. Certain birds. 4. The central
column or upright post of a circular staircase.
5. Place or room.

Down.—1. A consonant. 2. A pronoun. 3.
Evil. 4. A town in England noted for its col.

83.—Numerical Enigma.

The whole, composed of six letters, is a thriving
little town in Louisiana. The 1, 2, 4, 6, is
additional. The 3, 5, is refusal.

OLIVE L. C. S.

84.—A Half Square.

1. A learned man. 2. A proposition for peace.
3. Requiring much attendance. 4. Ensiform.
5. Tumults. 6. To come fully up to. 8. On-
ward. 9. A letter. CAPTAIN POSER.

85.—A Diamond.

1. A letter. 2. To cover. 3. Causing mirth.
4. Two taken together. 5. A species of mouse.
6. A wanderer. 7. A mountain of France. 8.
The knave of clubs at gleek. 9. A letter.

MAUDE.

Curtailments.

86.—Curtail a small fish, and leave a wizard.
87.—Farinaceous, and leave to pulverize.
88.—The French bean, and leave transparent
green quartz.
89.—Fluttering, and leave a ramble.
90.—A genus of mollusks, and leave to arouse.
91.—A form of galley, used by the Venetians,
and leave a kind of bandage for the head (Surg.).
Xoa.

Answers in two Months.

Prizes.

For the largest list of correct answers to this
month's puzzles, received before November 10th,
we offer an illustrated novelette; and for the
next best list, a small book of poems.

Solvers.

Answers to the July puzzles were received
from Birdie Lane, Peggy, Katie Smith, Nichol-
as, Betsey B., Geraldine, Cora A. L., Black
Hawk, Eulalie, Vinnie, J. D. L., Good Hugh,
Teddy, Birdie Browne, Jack, Ida May, Bert
Rand, Ann Eliza, I. O. T., Tellie Phone, and
Willie L.

Prize-Winners.

Katie Smith, Boston, Mass., for the largest
list of correct answers. J. D. L., Philadelphia,
Penn., for the next best list.

New puzzles of all kinds are always wanted
for publication.

EDITOR'S DRAWER.

THINGS PLEASANT AND OTHERWISE.

AN OLD MAID'S PRAYER.

An old maid knelt beneath a maple tree,
With feelings wonderfully queer;
She prayed both long and fervently:
"King, Lord, consent my voice to hear.
Thou knowest my wish before my tongue
Can name it, but it doth belong
To me to ask if I'd receive;
So Thou hast taught, and I believe.
Thou knowest it is not wealth or power
My heart desireth every hour,
But 'tis a husband, Lord, I want!
Wilt Thou the gift in kindness grant?
Oh, give me one that's kind and clever,
And Thine shall be the praise forever."

A hoot owl sat in the maple tree—
A jovial, happy owl was he!
He had been hid in the leaves all day,
Dozing and sleeping his time away;
But at the sound of the old maid's prayer,
The bird awoke with a sullen stare.
Silent he sat, till the prayer was through,
Then suddenly cried, "Who! who! who!"
Down went the old maid on her face;
"And dost Thou show such amazing grace
As to grant Thy servant Thy voice to hear,
Which has not before greeted mortal ear,
Since Sinai shook to its very base
At its terrible tones? Oh, wondrous grace!"

Thus to herself did the old maid speak;
So badly scared, she was faint and weak,
And lay half senseless upon the ground,
Till roused again by a terrible sound;
For again from the top of the tree was heard
The loud "Who! who!" of the ominous bird.
Then she answered, "Dear me, I hardly know
who!

Most anybody, Lord, will do!"

—Selected.

"CASH."

On circus day W. H. H. Cash, the great railroad monopolist of New Lisbon, was in the city. He had just made a few hundred thousand dollars on a railroad contract, and he decided to expend large sums of money in buying dry goods. He went into one of our stores and was passing along up the floor, when a black-eyed girl, with a dimple in her chin, pearly teeth, and red, pouting lips, who was behind the counter, shouted, "Cash, here!" Mr. Cash turned to her, a smile illuminating his face as big as a horse collar. He is one of the most modest men in the world, and as he extended his great big horny hand to the girl, a blush covered his face, and the perspiration stood in great drops on his forehead. "How do yew do?" said Cash, as

she seemed to shrink back in a frightened manner. They gazed at each other a moment in astonishment, when another girl, perhaps a little better looking, further on said, "Here, Cash, quick!" He at once made up his mind that she was the one that had spoken to him the first time, so he said, "Beg your pardon, Miss," to the black-eyed girl, and went on to where the other one was wrapping up a corset in a baseball undershirt. As he approached her she smiled, supposing he wanted to buy something. He thought she knew him, and he sat down on a stool and put out his hand, and said, "How have you been?" She didn't seem to shake hands very much, but asked if there were anything she could show him. He thought maybe it was against the rules for clerks to talk to anybody unless they were buying something, so he said, "Yes, of course. Show me corsets, stockings—anything." She was just beginning to look upon him as though she thought he had escaped from a lunatic asylum, when a little blonde on the other side of the store, as sweet as honey, shouted, "Cash, Cash, I need thee every hour. Come a-runnin'." To say that Cash was astonished is drawing it mild. He knew that they all wanted him, but he couldn't make out how they seemed to know his name. He looked at the little blonde a minute, trying to think where he had met her, when he decided to go over and ask her. On the way over he thought she resembled a girl that used to live in Portage. He went up to her, and with a smile that was childlike and bland, he said, "Why, how are you, Samanth?" The little blonde looked daggers at him. "Didn't you use to wait on the table at the Fox House, at Portage?" The girl picked up a roll of paper cambric and was about to brain him, when the floor-walker came along and asked what was the matter. Cash explained that since he came into the store three or four girls had yelled to him, and he couldn't place them. "There," said he, as another girl yelled "Cash," "there's another one of 'em wants me"; and he was going to where she was, when the floor-walker asked him if his name were Cash. "You bet it is," said Cash. It was then explained to him that the girls were calling cash boys. He thought it over a minute, and said, "Sold, by the great bald-headed Elijah. I'll be blasted if I ever had such a rig played on me." And he went out into the glare of the sunlight, with his hat pulled down over his eyes; and just then the circus procession came along, and he followed off after the elephants.

"To watch the newly-married couples who travel is one of the compensations of our arduous life," said an old hotel clerk the other day.

"How can you tell whether they are newly married or not?" inquired the *Sun* reporter, to whom this remark was addressed.

"Tell them?" ejaculated the clerk. "I can pick them out as easily as if they carried signs, 'We are just married.'"

"Yes; but how?"

"Well, in the first place, they are always more abundant in the fall and winter. I don't know why it is, but such is the fact. One of the signs of a newly-married couple is their spick-and-span new clothes. Somehow, when people get married, they generally get as many new clothes as possible; the bride and groom have new hats, and new trunks, and new dusters. Then, again, they spend money more freely. When a man is in his honeymoon he generally feels as though he ought to be generous. He has a grateful sort of spirit, and throws his money around as if he wanted to show that the world had used him well. He has put up his money for the occasion, and is not afraid to spend it. He is especially anxious that the bride shall eat and drink of the best. He must have a room with a private parlor, and not up-stairs very far, and with a good view. Sometimes he is a little chary of asking for these things, but when we suggest them he always says 'Yes.' Of course it is part of our business to suggest them."

"Are newly-married people bashful?"

"That depends. The widowers and widows don't mind it, but the young people are a little coy. At Niagara Falls we had most of the new couples late in the season, when the regular boarders left. I have seen as many as a dozen at a time file into the dining-room, trying to look as if they had not been married yesterday, but casting furtive glances around to see if they were suspected. The men are specially watchful lest somebody should be ogling the brides. One day I thought we should have a fight in the dining-room. A strapping big fellow from the West, in a suit of store clothes, sat down to the table with his bride, a buxom, brown-eyed beauty. She looked so fresh and rosy that she could not but attract attention, and she got it. Every gentleman in the room took more than one look at her, and she knew it. Of course she did not object. But the man began to get angry. He did not like to speak to the bride about it, because she was evidently not displeased. Finally he got up and went to the nearest gentleman whom he had observed, and said:—

"Look here, stranger, I'd like to know what you are staring at my wife for?"

"Your wife! Allow me to congratulate you, my dear fellow. You have got the finest wife in the city," said the gentleman addressed. "The fact is, I thought she was your sister. Excuse

me if I was rude; but if you don't want people to look at your wife, you really must never take her out in public. No offence meant, sir."

"The bridegroom went back to his place, but he took good care at the next meal to put his wife with her back to the wall."

"Which do you think takes to the new conditions most gracefully?"

"Women, by all odds. The men are always betraying themselves. They want to talk about it; they are full of the subject. Women are more artful, and have more adaptability to new circumstances. But, with all their arts, they can't deceive the old hotel clerk, and it is very seldom that we don't turn in a few dollars extra to the house on account of our knowledge. Another peculiarity of the newly-married couples who go to hotels," continued the clerk, "is that many of them live in the city. They always come equipped for a long journey. They have left the wedding guests with the announced intention of taking a long journey, conspicuously displaying, perhaps, their railroad tickets, and have been driven by way of the depot to a first-class hotel previously selected. I know one case where a bridal couple, to avoid detection, actually boarded a train, and started apparently on a journey, but took at the next station a train back to the city, and stopped at a hotel a few blocks from home. Then the wedding guests were permitted to stay at the feast as long as they pleased, without disturbing anybody."

A voracious traveler relates that while passing through New York State, he overtook a farmer dragging a lean, wretched-looking, horned sheep along the road. "Where are you going with that miserable animal?" said the traveler. "I'm taking him to the mutton mill to have him ground over," said the farmer. "The mutton mill? I never heard of such a thing. I will go with you, and witness the process." They arrived at the mill; the poor sheep was thrown alive into the hopper, and almost immediately disappeared. They descended into a lower apartment; and in a few moments there were ejected from a spout in the ceiling four quarters of excellent mutton, two skins of morocco, a fur hat of the first quality, a sheep's head handsomely dressed, and two elegantly carved powder horns!

Topnoody went to the minstrels last night, and the funny conundrums and jokes he heard set him to thinking. So at breakfast he began on Mrs. Topnoody. She was cold, and not very much in the humor for pleasantry, but Topnoody slashed away.

"I say, Mrs. Topnoody, can you spell hard water with three letters?"

"No, I can't; I might, though, if you had taken me to the minstrels last night."

This staggered him a little, but not seriously. "And you can't spell it? Well, i-c-e; ain't that hard water?"

Mrs. Topnoody never smiled, and Mr. T. went on.

"Now spell money with four letters."

"I don't know how," she said.

"Ha, ha, that's too good! A woman never can get at this sort of thing in the same clear-headed way that a man can. Well, the way to spell it is c-a-s-h; ain't that money?"

Again did Mrs. T. fail to smile, and Topnoody started out with another.

"Hold on a minute," she interrupted, looking ugly; "I've got one. Let's see if you can get it. Spell Topnoody with four letters."

Topnoody scratched his head, and gave it up.

"Ha, ha," laughed Mrs. T., "that's too good. A man never can get at this sort of thing in the same clear-headed way a woman can. Well, the way to spell it is f-o-o-l; ain't that Topnoody?"

But Topnoody never smiled; and the breakfast was finished in silence.

Bartholomew Lagson, an old negro, well known in Arkansas politics, was asked his opinion of the presidential election.

"Well, sah," said he, "I'se thought 'bout dis matter er good 'eal, an' I is now forced ter de 'clusion dat somebody's gwine ter get beat. It didn' look dis way at fust, but ez de campaign hab been pergressin' dis fack hab come ertrottin' erlong, keepin' right up wid de udder features o' de race."

"What do you think of Harrison?"

"He's er mighty fine man, sah; de bes' man whut de 'Publicans coulder put up. He toasts er mighty fine head roun' wid him."

"What do you think of Cleveland?"

"Well, sah, he's a monstrous fine man; de bes' one whut der Demmercrats coulder put up. Toats suthin' mighty solid on his shoulders."

"Which do you think will be elected?"

"Now, heah, you needn't say dat I'se mentioned the subjeck an' gin de thing erway, but dat's de leadin' p'int in de whole thing."

"Of course it is."

"Dat's wut I say. It's a leadin' p'int, an' one dat ain't gwine ter be settled till sometime airter de 'lection."

"Which of the candidates is your choice?"

"Sh-e-e, doan' open yer mouf dat way ergin. I'se got my eye on er post-office down heah in de country. Jes' tell me de man whut woul' be de mos' ap' ter gin me de office, an' I'll tell yer which one I'se fur."

A certain Boston deacon, who was a zealous advocate for the cause of temperance, employed a carpenter to make some alterations in his parlor. In repairing a corner near the fireplace it was found necessary to remove the wainscot,

when some things were brought to light which astonished the workman most marvelously. A brace of decanters, sundry bottles—all containing "something to take"—a pitcher and tumblers were cosily reposing in their snug quarters. The joiner, with wonder-stricken countenance, ran to the proprietor with the intelligence. "Well, I declare," exclaimed the deacon, "that is curious, sure enough! It must be old Captain Bunce that left those things there when he occupied the premises thirty years since." "Perhaps he did," returned the discoverer; "but, deacon, that ice in the pitcher must have been well frozen to remain solid."

When Edwin Forrest went to Detroit once, he produced a play called "Metamora." Supers were engaged to personate Indian warriors, and among them was a bright Irish lad who had a deep admiration for the great tragedian. At a point in the play where Metamora asks, "Am I not the great chief of the Pottawatomies?" the supers are supposed to grunt, "Ugh, ugh!" The stage-manager had carefully drilled them in what they were expected to do; but on the night of the performance the young Irishman was so transported by Forrest's acting as quite to forget that he was impersonating an Indian. When Forrest turned to the assembled warriors and thundered forth, "Am I not the great chief of the Pottawatomies?" the Irish boy's enthusiasm broke through all restraint. He leaped into the air with a wild shout, and twirling his tomahawk about his head, replied, "Begorra ye are!"

The Rev. Peter Glass, minister of Crail, was a fine sample of the old school of clergymen. One of his parishoners, a farmer named Cowan, was in the habit of systematically sleeping during the whole course of Mr. Glass's sermon, a practice which the minister resented by ordering his next neighbor, whenever he observed the sleeper, to wake him up. The farmer met his minister one day in the street, and promised to carry all his coals gratis if he would quietly wink at his somnolent condition in church. The next Sunday Mr. Cowan proceeded to sleep as before, when the preacher stopped, and cried out, "Wauken Robin Cowan!" On the poor man being roused accordingly, he felt a little indignant, and exclaimed, "Minister, dae ye no mind o' oor bargain?" "Oh, brawly dae I mind o' oor bargain," answered the minister; "but ye ken, Robin, though I agreed to let ye sleep, I didna gi'e ye permission to snore!"

A few years after the civil war, a former inhabitant had occasion to visit Richmond with his family, and, living at the time in the county of Patrick, fifty miles from any railway station, very few of the darkies in that county had ever seen a railway train. A nurse was a necessary

member of the family party, and he had secured the services of a coal-black specimen about fifteen years of age, who was as quick-witted as usual, but was as veritable a Topsy as ever "grewed." The party took the train at the nearest station, and after a few hours' run a broken rail threw the train off the track. Some of the carriages made a revolution down an embankment, and some were lodged on its incline at an angle of forty-five degrees. After great difficulty the Richmond citizen and his family scrambled out of the carriage on to the steep incline of the embankment. Finding his party all right, the citizen could not help feeling surprised at the placid appearance of the nurse, who, holding the baby in her arms, looked upon the scene as if nothing had happened. He said, "Milly, were you much frightened?" "No, sah," she replied; "I thought it had to stop that way!"

"I dropped into a hatter's last week to have my hat ironed," says a writer, in a contemporary. "A gentleman having just purchased a silk hat, one of the shopmen had taken it to the inner room to have it shaped to his head. While he stood bareheaded, awaiting his 'tile,' another gentleman entered, and, mistaking him for one of the assistants, said, as he handed him his hat, which was an old one, 'Want to have it ironed.' The gentleman accepted the situation humorously, and, taking the hat to the back-shop, called out, 'Just iron that, please.' Presently his new hat was brought out to him, and while he was adjusting it, customer number two came up briskly and said, 'You need not try it on. It looks all right. Give it to me.' 'My good man,' was the quiet retort, 'I don't mind being mistaken for a hatter's assistant, but when it comes to giving up my new hat for that old campaigner I have just passed in, the line has to be drawn.'"

THE BEGINNING AND THE END.



Only for the fun of the thing.



Just for an appetite.



To steady the nerves.



Who'll ask me to drink?



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JOHN BLAKEMAN'S CHRISTMAS.

BY MRS. E. E. BROWN.

PUBLIC opinion was divided in regard to John Blakeman. About half the people of Elmwood thought him a hard, close-fisted miser, who kept his family upon the shortest possible allowance, and dealt even that meagre pittance out grudgingly; while others were fully satisfied that he was one of those poor unfortunates whom fate delights to furnish with more kicks than coppers, and who, in the rough and tumble of everyday life, are sure to come off second-best, if not the worst used of all the poor toiling crowd.

This much was certain: he had moved into Elmwood from some place away out in what was called in those days of slow travel, "the far West." How he ever came to hear of the secluded village, or what his object was in settling there, the villagers could not imagine. Be that as it may, he bought for a trifling sum of money, a poor miserable wreck of a house, in an out-of-the-way corner of the town, battened up the cracks through which the wind for months had free access, boarded up the broken windows at the back, built a high, rough fence around the premises, and into the enclosure moved his family, consisting of a sickly wife, who looked as though she had been afflicted with the ague until she had neither strength nor courage to shake, and four lean, lank, half-clad, and half-starved-looking children. There they lived, or rather stayed; one could hardly call it living, to get along as they did.

They had few acquaintances, and no associates. The children were ridiculed and

hooted at by most of their schoolmates; and the two or three friends who, as children will sometimes do, clung to and defended the little outcasts, in proportion to the amount of scorn and contempt which they received from the rest of their school-fellows, never dared to venture inside of the high fence that shut the Blakemans out from the aristocratic world.

The children,—two boys and two girls,—were bright and active at play, apt and industrious at their studies, and in spite of the scorn and contempt that were heaped upon them, were intelligent and ambitious. With such dispositions as this, and being both quick-witted and good-natured, there was no reason why, in this land of free schools, they should not acquire a good, sound English education. And so they did.

As years sped on, the boys procured situations in one place and another where, when out of school, they earned money enough to clothe themselves a little more decently than they were clothed when they made their advent into town; and the girls who, as they got along into their teens, were really good-looking and attractive, had no trouble in finding employment suited to their tastes. The eldest, who had a decided talent for the "fine arts," apprenticed herself to the village milliner; and, in a short time bade fair to eclipse her employer in taste and execution. The other, who was of a less aspiring mind, contented herself with plain sewing for the village dressmaker. This work she performed at home; so while she was enabled to keep her wardrobe up to a state of re-

spectability, she was, at the same time, a help and a comfort to her mother, whose feeble health rendered her unfit for the cares and perplexities of the household.

All these years, while his children were struggling up to manhood and womanhood, John Blakeman was not an idle man. He had no regular trade, to be sure, but then he had no difficulty in procuring odd jobs enough about town to occupy his time; and he generally received fair pay for his labor. But what he did with his money was a mystery to the neighbors.

The house was better furnished as the children grew older, and Mrs. Blakeman, when she appeared out, which she did but seldom, was neatly and comfortably clad; but it was well known that all the comforts which were added to the household or wardrobe of their mother, were procured with the united earnings of her children. The old man still toiled on, and was still as meanly clad and uncouth as ever.

Changes come to us all; and the Blakemans were not exempt from the common lot of humanity. Charles, the eldest boy, left school and found a clerkship in a large dry goods establishment in a neighboring city, where, rumor said, he was slowly but surely winning his way up in the world. The eldest girl married a promising young lawyer, and moved off to a growing Western town. The youngest boy, a youth of eighteen, fancied himself slighted by a village maiden on whom he had set his young affections, and hiding his wounded love and pride as best he could, sought and obtained a situation as supercargo in an outward-bound merchant ship.

Nor did changes cease here. The mother, whose constitution had long been impaired by disease and hardship, passed quietly away from earth; and though the neighbors, who had grown to admire her Christian patience and resignation, and who, in spite of circumstances, were forced to respect the children she had reared, did much to cheer and comfort her declining days; yet, after all, when the good woman was laid to rest in a quiet corner of the cemetery, her presence among the dead was noticed much more than her absence among the living.

Murilla, the lawyer's wife, came from her Western home to care for her mother during her last illness; and when she went back after the funeral, she carried with her Clarice, the youngest of the flock. So the

old man was left alone. Here, again, public opinion clashed. Some people declared it a burning shame for John Blakeman's children to leave him alone in his old age, and, in their blindness and ignorance they predicted all sorts of judgments upon them for their lack of filial affection. Others, with a sagacious shake of the head, intimated that there must be a screw loose somewhere in the machinery that propelled old Blakeman's atom of a soul through this world; and that without doubt the young people had good reason for leaving their father alone.

Five years had passed by. All this while John Blakeman had been growing older, and shabbier, and more thinly clad, and his wrinkled face had taken on a half-famished look, pitiful to see. The battennings about his wretched old house had been warped by the summer sun, and wrenched away by the winter wind, until the cheering sunlight and the chilling snow alike, found ready entrance. He had grown feeble, too; and no longer able to wield the spade and wood-saw. He would, without doubt, have suffered for the common necessities of life, if it had not been for a few charitable families who, from their own tables, frequently sent the lonely old man his dinner or breakfast, as the case might be.

Charles, the eldest son, came home occasionally; and it was noticed that he always came well freighted with provisions; and that after each visit his father seemed comfortable for a few days. But only for a few days; he soon sank back into the old state of abject poverty and wretchedness.

Mysterious packages came, too, from the daughters; but the neighbors were never able to find out what they contained. It could not be clothing, for the recipient was never known to wear a new garment, and, had it not been for cast-off garments contributed by a few charitably disposed people, he would have been almost in a state of nudity.

Once there came to the post-office a large registered letter directed to John Blakeman, and bearing a foreign stamp. The post-master said it contained a large sum of money, but how he came by the knowledge he never told; and his townsmen declared that he must be mistaken, for money was a thing that apparently never passed through John Blakeman's hands.

Christmas was near at hand; and all Elmwood was making ready for a grand festival.

The different societies had agreed to unite in celebrating the day; an enormous tree was to bear its burden of toys and tapers in the town hall; there were to be speeches, and music; and the whole was to conclude with a wonderful supper. With such a programme to fill out, of course the little village was in a state of ferment,—all save John Blakeman. He, poor man, sat at home alone. And as the day before Christmas drew near its close, and the cold grew intense, he wrapped his scanty rags around him, and sat down in the gathering shadows of twilight, a wretched specimen of forlorn destitution.

The fire on his hearth was low; but the few sticks which were all the fuel he owned, were gathered carefully up into a basket to be saved for another day. The only provision which the house contained was a piece of hard dry bread, and a few cold boiled potatoes.

It was dark; for he had no money to waste on candles, and the shadows of Christmas eve fall just as thick and heavy over the earth as do the shadows of other evenings. The snow which lay lightly on the ground, was driven by the sharp, cutting wind through the crevices which were only half filled with bits of paper, and old rags; and the white, cold flakes piled themselves up, a miniature bank at the old man's feet, as he sat hovering over the few coals.

"Ugh, how cold it is!" he soliloquized, as he drew his ragged coat closer together. "If I were only rich, now, I would have a good fire; but it won't do. I have burnt my allowance of wood, and there is only enough left for another day. If I were only rich, rich!" and he repeated the word as though it were sweet to the taste.

The evening train of cars swept through the village, passing only a short distance from the rickety old house of John Blakeman; but though the whistle screamed its loudest, the miserable man never noticed it save by hugging his rags closer, and drawing his chair still nearer to the dying embers. But an unusual sound stole into the room, a sound as of sled-runners creaking on the ice that lay under the snow, and a man's voice shouting lustily to his oxen.

These sounds seemed to draw nearer the old man's window, and then they suddenly ceased. Immediately after, the tramp of many feet and the hum of mingled voices came from up the street in the direction of

the railway station, and one voice, which sounded familiar to the listening ears, called out in cheery tones:—

"Halloo! you're just in time. It's lucky I thought to order it sawed and split; for it doesn't look as if there was much fire inside. Throw it off, right here by the door; then if you will run of errands for us for awhile, you shall be well paid. Will you do it?"

"In course I will," replied the teamster, "jest as quick as I put these 'ere oxen under cover."

The rest of the company came up the broken board walk, toward the door, leaving farmer Clark's hired man to throw off the load of nicely split wood, and hurry home with the oxen.

John Bateman's heart stood almost still with surprise and fear, as a heavy hand was laid upon the latch, and an impatient shake was given the door.

"Wake up, father! It seems to me you have gone to bed early! We shall freeze if you don't hurry."

"Is it you, Charles? What made you come to night?"

The feeble steps shuffled across the floor, and the benumbed fingers drew back the rusty bolt. He opened the door but a crack, and, peering out into the dark, saw several figures where he had expected to see only one.

"Oh, Lord! who's with you? and what do they want?"

He pushed the door to as he spoke, leaving scarcely a crack between himself and his visitors.

"Let us in; we are cold. Nobody is going to harm you."

The door opened again, and in they came, —two, four, six grown people, and two children!

John Blakeman was dumb with astonishment; but there was no need for him to talk; eight tongues were busy, all at once, and the old room never before resounded to such a hubbub.

"Where's your light, father?" asked Charles; and taking a match from his pocket, he struck a light, and holding it up, discovered on the shelf a bit of candle in an old rusty iron candlestick.

"Don't waste it, Charles; it's all I've got," and the old man reached out his hand deprecatingly.

"Pooh! we'll have some more by and by. Don't you want to see your visitors? I'll

introduce you. Here, first of all is your son-in-law, Sidney Raymond, from Illinois, with his wife, Murilla, and their two children,—John, who is named for you, and little Emma, who bears our mother's name."

The old man stared in blank amazement, but uttered no word of greeting, though his daughter threw her arms about his neck and pressed her lips to his withered cheek.

"Next in order," went on Charles, "is Sylvia, Squire Browning's daughter, who lives here in town; she knew we were coming, and met us at the depot. This other young lady is your daughter Clarice, who came with Murilla; and last, but not least, is this great brawny six-footer, so whiskered and sunburnt that even I didn't know him when he came into my store last week! Look at him, and see if he looks like that weazen-faced shaver that we used to know as Ross Blakeman!"

Ross Blakeman shook the old man's hand till his teeth fairly chattered.

"What does it mean? How came you all here," he gasped.

"Oh, you may give Ross the credit of the whole affair," replied Charles. "He proposed it, and sent for the others to join us. Sidney thought it a capitial scheme, and came right on, leaving his clients to settle their own disputes. So you see, we've all come home to have a jolly Christmas under the dear old roof!" and he gave a sarcastic smile of contempt as he glanced at the bare old crumbling walls.

"You brought things with you, I suppose?" inquired the old man.

"Brought things with us!" answered Ross, "not a bit of it! We expect you to entertain us in splendid style! The ladies have kindly volunteered to do the work, and you are to furnish material for a grand Christmas festival! Sidney was wise enough to suggest a cord of wood the first thing; and we ordered it to be prepared for the fire. Here comes Clark's man, now, for his pay."

"But I can't pay him!" gasped the old man. "I've no money, and I didn't order it, either!"

"Well, we ordered it for you. And as for money; I sent you five hundred dollars less than a year ago; and know that you received it."

"Yes," chimed in Charles, "and I have sent you as much more within the past three years."

"And I sent you a hundred only last month," said the young lawyer.

"And Clarice and I have sent you several packages of warm bed-clothes and comfortable wearing apparel," said Murilla; "so it must be that you have got money enough to pay for a cord of wood; see if you can't find a little somewhere about the house; the man is waiting for his pay."

Clark's man, who had entered, stood a little back from the group, with a broad grin upon his face, and both hands in his pockets.

"I tell you I haven't got any money!" repeated the old man, who was growing angry. "It takes a great deal to live on. Besides, I don't believe in keeping Christmas; it costs too much."

"Yes," replied Charles, "it costs too much,—that's just it! Now, let me tell you a few plain truths. The company appointed me speaker for the occasion, so I may as well begin. When you sold your farm out West, years ago, you put several thousand dollars into the bank, and moved into this wretched old shell of a tenement, instead of buying a decent house as you ought; and I know you have never drawn from the bank a cent of either principal or interest. Then, you kept us all half-starved and half-clothed for the sake of hoarding every cent you could get; and though you could but know all the while that we were laughing-stocks for our schoolmates and objects of pity to the village people, because of your miserly propensities, you refused to clothe us with common decency. You know, too, that our poor, patient mother actually suffered for the comforts of life until we children were old enough to earn a little money. After we left home and struck out into the world for ourselves, we thought that perhaps you might make yourself comfortable, providing the money was given you for that purpose. So together we have sent you enough to procure all of the comforts and many luxuries of life. Instead of using the money as we requested you to do, you have hoarded it up secretly, and lived on in this miserable, degraded, heathenish way. But we have determined that for once you shall know what it is to keep Christmas in a real jolly old style! We have decided, too, that you are able to bear the expense, and that we will not pay one cent toward it, either directly or indirectly. So you may as well come down with the dust, for you have got to

give us a Christmas dinner in good shape for once in your life."

"It's a lie!" exclaimed the old man, "you know I haven't any money; and you may as well clear out, all of you! I didn't ask you here, and I don't want you!"

"I know you didn't ask us to come; we are giving you a surprise party. Where else should we meet together to enjoy our Christmas, if not in the old home? It is late, too, for us to hunt up lodgings elsewhere, so we shall have to stay with you all night, at least. We know there are bed-clothes enough in the house to make us comfortable, with the rousing fire that we mean to keep all night. Now, girls, sit down and make out a list of what we shall want; and don't beat all saving. Here, I have pencil and paper; we will set down the articles. Clark's man is going to the village for us."

"We will begin with a barrel of flour," said Murilla, "we may not have time to use it all while we are at home; but father will need it after we have left. We will order a variety of bread, cakes and pies from the bakery, for immediate use. Then we want a huge turkey, two pairs of chickens; a nice roasting piece of beef, two gallons of oysters, a keg of nice butter, and one of lard, a box of sugar, twelve dozen of eggs, all sorts of vegetables, spices and condiments; then we shall want raisins, citron, oranges, figs, all kinds of nuts and a barrel of nice apples. Is that all?"

"Tea and coffee," suggested Clarice; so they were added to the list. Then Ross, who remembered that his father delighted in a good smoke when anyone else would furnish tobacco, added, "a pipe and some first-rate tobacco."

Every article that was mentioned elicited a groan from John Blakeman; and when the list was completed his distress of mind was pitiful to see.

"Now, father," said Charles, as he folded the paper and put it in his pocket, "I want some money. I am going with Clark's man to see that the purchases are all right, and will bring you back the change."

"I tell you I haven't got any money, you know I haven't!" reiterated the old man; and the tears actually rolled down his face.

"Perhaps we can find some," suggested Clarice. So all hands commenced the search. Every likely and unlikely hiding place was peered into without success. At last Murilla noticed a loose brick in one cor-

ner of the hearth, and lifting it discovered a well-filled pocket-book.

John Blakeman started to his feet to take it from her; but it was of no use. He was powerless in the hands of the three stalwart men. So he was obliged to sit helplessly by, while his precious treasure was examined by other eyes than his own.

There was the very five hundred dollars that Ross had sent him so long ago; there, too, was all that Charles and Sidney had ever sent him, together with other bills, amounting in all to nearly two thousand dollars!

"Don't be alarmed, father," said Charles, as he closed the pocket-book, "I will bring you back the right change;" and without heeding the bitter groans of the miser, he started on his errand.

While he was gone the rest of the party bustled about strangely. Fires were kindled in every room where it was possible; blankets were hunted up and aired; and the beds, so long unused, were made ready for occupants.

A long table was improvised from barrels and boards, and covered with the snowy linen which Mrs. Blakeman's own hands had last folded away; and when all things had been made ready, they sat down to wait for Charles. They did not have to wait long. A sleigh drew up to the door, and in a short time its contents were transferred to John Blakeman's kitchen.

The list had been filled out completely; and when the things had been stored away, and the driver had departed, Charles drew from his pocket a bottle of choice old wine, and filling a glass handed it to his father.

"Drink it," said he; "it will do you good."

He took it mechanically, and drank it like one in a semi-conscious state. He had lost all power of opposition, and seemed perfectly dazed by what was going on.

The table was laden with cooked viands from the bakery, and after a huge pot of tea had been prepared the party sat down to supper. The old man took what was offered him without a word; but all noticed that he ate like a hungry child.

Toward the close of the meal, he seemed to recover his senses in a measure, and ventured one or two inquiries as to the cost of certain articles; but made no objection at all to anything that was proposed.

The next morning, at an early hour, all

hands were astir; and every one, even to the smallest child, was fully employed. And such a Christmas dinner as they prepared! There was not another like it in all Elmwood! The board table fairly creaked beneath its load of dainties, and the old house shook with mirth and jollity. John Blakeman himself could not resist the happy influence that surrounded him, and more than once, the ghost of a smile was seen to cross his face.

All through the day there had been a great deal of mysterious whispering going on, between Sylvia Browning and Ross Blakeman; and once during the day, Ross had been over to the Squire's and held a lengthy confabulation with that dignitary himself.

But, for all that, John Blakeman was surprised when after dinner, Murilla came to him and said:—

"Where is that suit of clothes that I sent you last fall, father? We want you to dress up in it nicely, for we are to have a wedding here this evening."

"A wedding!" exclaimed the old man; "Who is to be married?"

"Ross and Sylvia. They were almost engaged before he went to sea; but there was some sort of a misunderstanding between them. It is all right now, and they are to be married this evening, so that we may all be present at the wedding."

"Ross married! Ross married!" repeated the old man. "Why, he's only a boy!"

"You forget, father. He is almost twenty-four; time flies fast, you see."

Of course John Blakeman acquiesced in this arrangement; for his mind seemed completely shattered, and he obeyed like a dutiful child.

The wedding took place in the evening, and a solemn and impressive ceremony it was. Squire Browning and his wife were present; and without doubt more than one thought how strange it was that such a company should be gathered for such a purpose in the shabby old house of John Blakeman.

It was the first and last Christmas festival that was ever held beneath that roof. In the night a cry of fire startled the sleeping inmates. Probably from some defect in the crumbling chimney, the old house had taken fire, and its occupants had barely time to escape, taking with them what few articles of value the building contained.

The village hotel sheltered them during the remainder of their stay in town; and when Sidney Raymond and his family went back to Illinois, John Blakeman went with them; a quiet, simple old man, content to sit all day long without speaking a word, and without any apparent interest in what was passing.

But he did not remain with them long. Privation, rather than time, had shattered both mind and constitution, and ere another Christmas came round, he was brought back to Elmwood and laid to rest beside his wife.

WHITE CHRYSANTHEMUMS.

BORN of the clouds and darkness,
Of the frosts and early snow;
When the summer blooms have faded,
The beautiful Christ flowers blow.
All through the budding springtime,
All through the summer's heat,
All through the autumn's glory,
They hide their blossoms sweet;
But when the earth is lonely,
And the bitter north winds blow,
With a smile of cheer for the dear old year,
The Christmas blossoms blow.

Sweet as a dream in summer,
White as the drifting snow;
When our hearts are filled with grieving,
The beautiful Christ flowers blow.
Not all the south wind's wooing
Opens their secret heart;

Slender they grow, and stately,
Guarding their life apart.
But when the earth is dreary,
And the heavy clouds hang low,
With their tender cheer for the wayworn year,
The Christmas blossoms blow.

Sweetest of all consolers!
Fairest of flowers that grow!
When hopes and flowers have faded,
The beautiful Christ flowers blow.
Bright in the cottage window,
Sweet in the darkened room,
Fair in the shortened sunlight,
Cheering the dusky gloom.
Oh! when our hearts are lonely,
And clouds of care hang low,
With blessed cheer for the dying year,
The Christmas blossoms blow.

BURIED GOLD.

LEGENDS OF ANCIENT WEALTH.

A LIMITED liability company has just been started of a most original, not to say startling, character. It is the *Compania Anonima Exploradora de las Huscas del Inca*; and, according to the account sent to the *London Standard* by the British consul at Mollendo, the object of this society of capitalists is to search the old burial-grounds of the Peruvian Incas for antiquities, valuables and anything else which can be turned into money. The working capital of the association is only £8000, and most of the ground the corporation have in view has, no doubt, been already ransacked more than once. But as the Lima authorities have granted the required concession, it is quite possible that this licensed society of tomb riflers—if they avoid the temptation to “discover” modern antiquities—of which a prodigious number are for sale in both Mexico and Peru—may not only add considerably to our knowledge of the empire which Pizarro overthrew, but return a fair dividend to their shareholders.

On the ethical aspect of the business it is not necessary to enlarge. A sensitive regard to the pockets of the living never having been a characteristic of the modern Peruvians, we can scarcely expect them to be very susceptible about the buried treasure of the dead. The *Socieda Exploradora* is only doing, in a regular and business-like fashion, what has been done over and over again in a less methodical manner. Tiahuanuco, “the Baalbec of the new world,” has been turned inside out as far as the vast stones of this ancient city of the dead will permit. Its ruins like those of Carthage, have been a quarry, out of which meaner cities have grown beautiful. Every church and village in the valley is built out of its hewn block, and even the Cathedral of La Paz, in Bolivia, twenty leagues away, is indebted to this pagan town for the material of its walls. For ages past the hope of finding the Incas treasures has wasted the lives and disturbed the sleep of scores of Peruvians. A perfect *corpus* of traditions has grown up among these treasure-hunters; and, though their exertion have not often been attended with much success, the dis-

covery of a very small image of gold or silver has been enough to raise the wildest hopes, and to stimulate afresh the labors of these waiters on Providence. The noble fortress of Cuzco was half thrown down by the Conquistadores in order to save cutting stones for their houses, and what the masons left was razed in a vain search for the golden chain of Huavna Ccapac, which one of many legends affirmed to have been buried thereabout.

It is useless to assure the Indian, or the less educated Peruvian, that the foreign traveler who works so diligently with theodolite and surveying chain is engaged in no more lucrative labor than that of trying to preserve for the world some outline of the stupendous works of a vanished race. They know better. The “Gringo” is searching for the Incas treasures. And the chances are that when the antiquary return in the morning he will find the ground where he had planted pegs as guides for resuming his survey deeply excavated, or the landmarks carefully removed. Everywhere he is watched and followed by people hoping to obtain some clew to the whereabouts of the *tapadas* he is supposed to be in search of; and instances are not unknown in which his mules, laden with clay figures, “squeezes,” and such like archæological plunder, have been overhauled by brigands, certain that at last they had hit upon the long-lost treasures. For three centuries the work of destruction has been going on, until now-days there is not a great deal to preserve of the finest monuments erected by the singular people whose civilization was in some not unimportant respects superior to that of the race which destroyed it. Some of the legends of buried wealth are very substantial. Felipe de Pomanes, for instance, tells how, under the old castle of Cuzco, there is a vault containing figures of all the Incas wrought in fine gold, and that, in his day, a certain Dona Marie de Esquevil saw them with her own eyes. According to the current tradition, this lady had married a descendant of the Incas, whom she used to reproach with being too poor to support her in fitting state. At last, the irritated hus-

band led his wife blindfolded through many a winding passage, until she found herself in a room full of wealth such as no one ever saw save Allan Quatermain and his friends in Kakualand, and he then begged to know whether he was still as poor as she thought him. But what reply the lady made, or whether she was content with the knowledge of the secret hoard, the chronicler fails to inform us. The Indians still declare that the golden chair of the Incas was sunk in the baths at Pultamarac, and that—as the earliest historians of the conquest also mention—there are gardens with artificial trees of the purest gold beneath the Temple of the Sun at Cuzco. When Humboldt visited the neighborhood the story was repeated to him by a poor lad, a descendant of the ancient kings; but he declined to seek for the hidden wealth, on the ground that the possession of the gold would only cause his neighbors to hate and injure him.

"We have a little field," the Indian added, "and good wheat," and so he was content.

It was widely believed that during the rebellion of Pumacaqua, in 1814, the rebel chiefs drew upon these or others traditional treasures. An old lady of the Astete family told Mr. Markham—some thirty years ago—that her father, who was a colleague of Pumacaqua, saw him enter the council chamber laden with the sinews of war, and dripping wet from the journey he had made up the bed of the Huatanay, to a cave filled with golden figures. And it is certain that when the rebels were entirely defeated on the plain of Ayaverene, Pumacaqua offered with his last breath to produce a pile of "oro" bigger than that collected by Atahualpa as a ransom for his life. But, as his offer was declined, the secret of the cave was not divulged.

We will not attempt to predict what degree of success is likely to attend the labors of the new company. It is, of course, beyond denial that the Incas were enormously rich in the precious metals. Many of the skulls found in the old graves are either gilt or encircled by bands of gold, ornamented with slender feather-shaped ornaments of the same material. The Temple of the Sun, even after allowing the largest deduction for the grandiloquent language of the Conquistadores, must have been loaded with plates of gold. The cornices, inside and out, were

composed of or covered with it. The walls were thick with gold. The figures of the sun and the other deities were of the same material; and in many public and private collections there are plates of beaten gold, which bear out Garcilasso's story to the effect that the inside of the building was lined with them. The golden chain of the Incas, every link of which was the thickness of a man's arm, and its length so great that it went twice round the great square of Huacapata, was said to have been thrown in the deep take of Urcos to save it from the Spaniards. This tradition was still fresh when Garcilasso wrote, and he gives us the names of the men who undertook to carry a drift through the ridge to drain the lake. This drift is still visible. It is also a piece of history that when Atahualpa was in captivity he offered as the price of his ransom a room filled with gold. Pizarro, thinking that there must be more, demanded double the amount, an extortion to which the Incas agreed, and dispatched runners all over the kingdom to bring the required amount. These messengers were on their way to Caxamarca, when they heard that their sovereign had been strangled. They then threw down their loads of gold which, it is believed are buried somewhere in the mountains of Llanganati, to the northwest of Quito, though diligent search has never revealed the spot.

These and such like mythical tales, keep alive the old tradition; and a find now and then lends vigor to the waning enthusiasm of the seekers after *las tapadas*. In an age when there was no other place of security, wealth was certain to be buried, and if the owner died without revealing the secret, it might remain concealed forever. More especially was this the case in Peru at the period of the conquest; for the natives, horrified at the cruelty of the Spaniards and their lust for *plata*, were glad to consign to the earth the hateful thing which had brought so much misery on the race.

At Chimus, not many years ago, there was found in a closet in the ruins a great heap of vessels of gold and silver, piled layer above layer, all evidently dating from the time of the Incas. It is, therefore, possible that wonderful finds are yet to be lighted upon. It is, at an rate, certain that if nothing more is got, it will not be for lack of digging.

SOME YELLOW LEAVES.

BY MISS M. G. KENNALD.

THE following story, told by an ancestress of mine, I have read with no little sense of sadness. The leaves it is written upon are yellow and faded now, and she, poor soul, has slept many years in her quiet grave; therefore I feel no sense of wrong in letting others peruse them. She believed:—

You know, that while a thousand unnoted days sink deep into the waters of oblivion, the chance hour, when there dawned a new epoch in our lives, though not more bright or memorable in itself, remains forever bathed in its own morning light. Therefore I remember with distinctness the aspect of a certain summer morning among the mountains, where my father had fixed our dwelling. The dew glistened on the long blades of grass, and shadows, clearly defined, fell across the turf from clumps of tall pines and groups of flowering shrubs, while the cool air bore upon its soft currents the scent of sweet-brier and fern. My father always fancied he could talk to me more unreservedly in the freedom of the open air, far away up the hills, beyond the sound of farm-house labor and village cries. Sometimes my father, who was a misanthrope by profession, and somewhat of a hypochondriac, would unbend from his customary restraint, and expatiate upon the long line of independent yeomen, of whom I was the last descendant. We were of English lineage; our ancestors had all been brave, loyal and honorable, and the women with no stain or slur upon their fair reputation. Often I, who had inherited something of their vaunted beauty, would assure him that I should not detract from the spotless character of my ancestors, for that I should never be tempted.

I was reiterating this assurance with a merry laugh that morning, as I sat beside him in the drowsy solitude, when the snort of a horse behind us caused me to spring to my feet, though my father sat still in the imperturbability of age. The rider reined in his horse with a strong curb, as he started aside at my appearance. For a moment or two, till the animal was subdued, I scrutinized the rider furtively. A dark, grave, most melancholy-looking man, approaching

middle age, with a face filled with profound lines of some past suffering and conflict, which was not altogether past yet, and with keen eyes that fastened upon me with a penetrative look before which mine fell abashed, only to be lifted up again, as by some fascination, on the first moment I believed his attention to be directed elsewhere.

"Mr. Trenham?" he said, in a low, grave, but pleasant voice. "I am Lonsdale, Dr. Lonsdale, of Fulham. I received a message from you this morning."

"You did, sir," answered my father. "I have been disappointed in not having seen you before. Did you not remember that we are allied to you by marriage? This girl, my daughter, is first cousin to the Margaret Trenham you married nine years ago."

"Yes," said Dr. Lonsdale, while a spasm of recollection crossed his features.

"There is little likeness," pursued my father; "poor Madge was very lovely; yet Annie does resemble her at times. I've never met you before, doctor; but I remember her kindly—the only child of my only brother, both entered now into rest. I always think of them when I look forward to leaving my girl here. Doctor, you are the only man in the world whom blood or marriage connects with us, and I was hurt, sir, when nearly a month ago we settled in Fulham, and you have never been near us."

"I have been busy," he stammered.

"Doctor," said my father, in a pleading tone, "I am getting an old man, and I'm ailing. My physicians deceive me, sir, and play upon me with experiments. But I heard your character, and I determined to come and place myself and my daughter under your charge. She is a delicate girl, and has no mother to take care of her; if Annie should die, as Margaret did, before her father, it would bring down my gray hairs in sorrow to the grave."

"Father, father!" I exclaimed, buoyantly, meeting with a smile the steady, professional gaze fixed upon me, "you fret yourself for nothing. I am as strong as a young lion; I am brimful of life."

Perhaps there was something in my voice or smile that reminded Dr. Lonsdale of

Margaret, for his whip and bridle fell from his nerveless hold, and he bowed his face upon his hands. A moment after he raised it again, quivering with emotion.

"O Dr. Lonsdale!" I cried, "I am sorry for you. We did not think we should grieve you like this so long after."

"I will call upon you this evening," he said, after a moment's pause. "I am riding now to a village some miles distant."

He held out his hand to my father, but overlooked me, and I saw him ride away with a faint sense of mortification and disappointment. I, who had known no relatives, felt my heart lean towards this man upon whom we had so slight a claim of connection. As his figure stood for a moment upon the near horizon, in strong relief against the sky, and then disappeared quickly, my father broke the silence into which we had fallen.

"He is wondrously constant," he said, "unless, indeed, he aspires to the glory of a great and immortal sorrow. I loved your mother, Annie, but seven years after her death I could speak of her with a kind of quiet pleasure. To be sure, Margaret was a delicate creature; too delicate for this world, poor girl."

Dr. Lonsdale came to us that evening. At first he was constrained and absent, evidently afraid of further allusions to his wife, but as he found my father entering into topics of general interest, his manner became less reserved. In a few weeks a pleasant intimacy was established between them; and at our fireside he permitted himself to return to a degree of the frank and joyous temperament that was his by nature. He allotted to me studies with which I had not intermeddled before, as my father dreaded making me a clever woman; but Dr. Lonsdale, when he asserted himself, had a rare power of exacting a charmed compliance to his will. There was something masterful in his character which bowed us both before him, and my father, as well as I, enjoyed the tacit authority he assumed over us. Sometimes, as I sat opposite them, I would meet their eyes fixed upon me, and my father would instantly turn his vacillating glance, while Dr. Lonsdale's keen and prolonged gaze always compelled me to lower mine. His professional visits caused him to pass our cottage three or four times a week and it became my custom to listen for his coming, that I might hasten to the

window, or run down to the garden gate at the first sound of his horse's hoof-beats. Often my father wanted him to call on his return; and as the winter wore away, it became a settled thing that he should stay an hour or two with us, instead of going back to his solitary home.

The conviction came first that I loved him, as perhaps it often comes, in a dream. Mine was vivid and recurrent, but ever forgotten in the morning; and I hunted the dim and shadowy scenes which flitted through the chambers of my fancy in vain. One evening, after a day of perplexed reverie, I said to him, "Doctor, here is a psychological problem for you. I have a dream, a troubling dream, which returns every night and goes from me every morning, like Nebuchadnezzar's, of old. Wise man and philosopher that you are, I would you could tell it to me, and the interpretation thereof."

A long discussion followed upon all the theories and mysteries of dreaming. When he had said good-night, and I went with him to the outer door, as was my custom, he loitered on the threshold.

"This owl-like phantasy of yours, Annie," he said, "brooding in the recesses of your mind, you must make it known to me when it ventures into daylight."

* I sighed involuntarily. He was so close to me that I could not look up into his face; and he still held my hand lightly in his, as if he hesitated to leave me. An unusual sensation of embarrassment and shyness swept over me; it seemed as though we had stood and lingered so in some anticipatory past, and I felt as if I knew the words he would utter next. Then my dream flashed across my mind significantly, and as clearly-defined as the shadows of the cottage gables on the frosty, moonlit lawn. I knew that I loved him deeply, tenderly, unchangeably.

"Annie," he said, falteringly, and he repeated my name twice again. "Annie, child Annie, can you keep a secret?"

Could I keep my own secret from him?

"I have something I want to tell you," he continued, when I remained silent; "but your lips must be sealed about it, especially to your father. He must never know. I ought to tell you"; and he said the last words sharply and decisively, as if in answer to some objection.

"Tell me," I answered; "I will keep it faithfully."

Once again he covered his face with his hands, and there smote upon my ear a deep, low sob of suppressed anguish.

"Nay," I said, "you need not fear to tell me; I could not be treacherous. You know I am a Trenham, Dr. Lonsdale."

"O Annie!" he groaned, "Margaret is not dead; she is living still in infamy and dishonor. She betrayed me."

Then when I stood beside him, grave but tranquil in my outer mien, while every nerve tingled, and madness seemed about to take possession of my burning brain and speechless lips, he told me how Margaret Trenham, my cousin, had been false to her family, to him, and to her God.

"It was at her own request," he added; "she bade me tell her father and uncle she was dead, lest they should curse her. She cared nothing for my curses."

"Dr. Lonsdale," I said, quietly, "you shall find me true—true and secret as the grave."

But now to be true to him was to be false to myself and my traditionary virtue. Margaret's sin had proved the pathway of temptation for me. Believe me, I fought against the consciousness which had bloomed innocently for a moment, and was then cankered with a deadly blight; it had come into birth, and it would not perish obediently at the first word that pronounced its existence evil. I declared my love to be a moral impossibility; I denied and confessed it to myself alternately; it poisoned all my pursuits, and made me fitful and capricious. Then I would test myself, and sit quietly in some window while I listened calmly, keeping a critical watch over my tell-tale pulse, to the sound of his approach along the road; but before he could pass the house, the exigency of passion burst through my weak control, and I would press to the window to catch a glimpse of him as he would pass by. My father's shrewd smile, when he looked at me over his spectacles, was torture to me. I knew too well what he meant and hoped one morning, when he bade me take some books home to our kinsman, and would not listen to any excuse, however urgent.

"I will conquer it," I vowed, mentally; "this cruel, delusive fancy shall not destroy me. It shall not come between my friend and me. When I am in his home, I will picture Margaret there, too."

I had been often to his house before, sometimes alone, sometimes with my father.

Such a solemn, soundless house it was, with a hush in it as if some one were lying dead. That day I thought the doctor's face more clouded than usual, and the sunshine pouring in through the window glistened upon the shade of gray in his dark hair. He came and seated himself beside me, and looked keenly into my downcast face. I tried to enter into conversation with him in my wonted tone, but I could not think of anything I dared say.

"Child Annie," he said, abruptly, "I have wished to have some talk with you for a long time. You have grown nervous and uncertain of late, and your father and I feel anxious about you. Now, it seems to me you have some fancy preying on your mind. I have been taxing your mental faculties without due regard to your health, and it is not unusual in such cases for some chimera to take possession of the brain and cause much harassing doubt. It strikes me the books I have lent you may have suggested some apparent anomaly; or it may be some religious difficulties which haunt and distress you. If it be so, let me claim your confidence as your friend, and we will confront the phantom together. There can be nothing really wrong, my child; it is a spectre of the imagination."

I sat in persistent silence, that wore the air of sullenness; but he continued to urge me to be frank with him. At last I said impatiently that nothing ailed me; I was only growing tired of our secluded life, and wanted to see the world. Repeating the falsehood over and over again defiantly, as if to convince myself of its truth, I left him.

I cannot describe to you the first time when I stood face to face with death; when there befell me the only bereavement with which mortality could threaten me. My father died, and in the presence of our last majestic enemy the voice of every other foe was stilled for a time. There was a great calm, in which the one great wave of sanctified sorrow swept over the under-current of earthly passion. But it was not forever.

The lapse of time brought to me both consolation and temptation. Dr. Lonsdale was my father's sole executor, and I was left in his guardianship. He provided a companion and chaperone in an aged relative of his own, whose residence with me gave repute to his continued visits. Again the tumult swelled within my soul.

There came a day when I fought desperately with the demon that possessed me, and there was no strength left in me. As it neared its close I wandered away despairingly, as Cain might have wandered away with his solitary curse in the untrodden plain of the old world. I was out unwittingly on the uplands; a sultry air brooded heavily upon the land, and deepened the ominous silence of the solitude, and in the north a pile of lurid clouds raised their threatening and serrated battlements into the narrowing vault of the sky. Not far from the spot where I first met Dr. Lonsdale, stood two Norwegian pines, the only trees within the range of sight; one had been barked and split by a thunderstorm the summer before, and now pointed mockingly with its bleached fingers to the electric clouds; the other began to groan and wave its beckoning arms under the freshening gale. I hurried on with a hopeless wish that it might attract the lightning as its scathed fellow had done, for an accidental death, so said I in my madness, would be better than the life I led. I threw my arms around the rough tree, and with hidden face listened recklessly for the first roll of the thunder. That was not the sound that drove away the silence; it was his voice; he had followed me, unheard and unseen.

"Annie," he said, "what folly is this? Come home before the storm begins."

"I will not come home," I cried, turning to him with gloomy defiance. "Home!" I repeated, "where is it? I have had no home since my father died."

"You do not know what you are saying, Annie," he answered; "you are exciting yourself."

"I mean what I say," I replied; "to be sure, there is an empty house down there which you and the world call home; but there is no one there to care for and to love. Oh, I cannot bear loneliness as you do, who are stony! Don't mock me by telling me to go home."

Dr. Lonsdale's face grew grayer in the gathering darkness, and then he spoke vehemently, but in muttered tones, as if the listening air upon the desolate hill-top would catch the words and trumpet them to the world.

"Annie, you compel me to speak, though for months I have kept down my secret with a heavy hand. It is your folly that makes me own that I, your guardian, your

father's trusted friend, have forfeited my honor, and love you, Annie—my little Annie, my true, innocent, guileless child."

In the deep, oppressive gloom, with the muffled booming of the thunder rolling towards us, he muttered this avowal, which brought to me no release from suffering, no accession of joy or peace, but laid upon me a heavier burden.

"O God!" I said, but I addressed neither God nor him, only some vague, inexorable fate that I could not comprehend. "O God! is this love really evil?"

As I spoke, the citadel of thunder opened its embrasures, and a broad flash of lightning, dropping globes of fire, shot across the sky. Dr. Lonsdale's horse, with a scream of terror, broke its fastenings and bounded madly down the hill, while I leaned shuddering against the tree, till he passed his arm round me and bore me hurriedly to his home, followed by terrific peals of thunder. Soon we reached his door, breathless and exhausted, and stayed for a minute to watch the floods of rain that began to pour, forgetting momentarily the words that had passed between us under the Norwegian pines. But presently the guilty recollection came. I withdrew by an instinctive impulse, and seated myself at the farthest corner of the sitting-room; while he, miserable and conscience-smitten, leaned against the fire-place, where the gloomy twilight threw a ghastly and discolored shade around him.

"You will hate me now," he said, at last, bitterly; "you will shrink from me; there is no more solace of companionship for me. I thought I should neutralize to myself the temptation and charm of your presence when I told you Margaret was still alive, but I did not. Every day there was some new fitness, something in harmony with me. Yet more than all I love your goodness, that which will now condemn me."

Reluctantly, but as if irresistibly, I dragged myself to his side, and looking up into his steady eyes, as if I gained strength from them, I told him all—how I had loved him first, and still loved him, against honor and peace and conscience. While I confessed in broken sentences the conflict and the humiliation I suffered, the storm without subsided, and a low, wailing wind moaned by gusts under the eaves. Dr. Lonsdale maintained a silence which extorted from me all my oppressive secret.

"I must be good," I said, pleadingly, when I had finished. I felt a longing for his strong arms to be clasped around me; yet when he stretched them out to me, involuntarily I shrank away from him. He saw and understood the gesture of recoiling, and drew a chair for me to his side.

"Annie," he said, "you must not be afraid of me."

"May I go home?" I asked.

"You said you had no home when I found you on the hill. This ought to be your home, here, where I sit solitary day by day, with no voice of wife or child to fall upon my ear. Margaret is dead to me, yet horribly alive. This morning I had a letter from my wife, Annie—a begging letter. Annie, no one in the world knows I have a wife living except us three, and she would never meddle."

If he ever wavered from the set purpose of his will, it was when he glanced round on his solitary hearth, and his eyes rested on me as solitary as himself. But the hope that kindled in his heart for a moment, died away before my earnest gaze.

"God knows," he said, sadly, "it gives me no pleasure to know that you love me. If I stood alone I might conquer myself, but every word and look of yours enfeebles me. Annie, you must go."

"Yes," I answered, rising instantly, "I must go home now, and you will see me again to-morrow. We will return to our old life, and never mention this again."

"Child," he replied, almost with a smile, "you do not understand yourself or me. It is impossible for us to return to the old life with this consciousness between us. By-and-by you may meet with some one whom you can love without blame."

"You don't know what it will be to me," I cried. "I never have been altogether alone, with no one to tell me what to do. Life is very wretched to all of us. Why does God let Margaret live to be a curse to everybody!"

A great darkness fell suddenly around me, and there was a sound in my ears as of mighty rushing waters. I swooned away.

When I left my home my youth passed away, and I sank into a melancholy, inert, patient woman. Thus three or four years passed. Sometimes when I was treading the streets of the great city, I wondered whether Margaret's feet had trodden them

before me. One day I met her. I, pale and wan and spiritless, saw a shadow of myself, with deeper pallor and wanness, and a more broken spirit looking out of her dim eyes. We stopped, and I said, hurriedly:—

"Where do you live?"

"Nowhere," she answered, sullenly; "I don't need your charity."

She passed hastily along, but her companion, an elderly, respectable looking woman, stayed to speak with me.

"She is coming home with me now, and I will tell you where I live. She is very ill, ma'am, and I am sorely sorry for her."

I tended Margaret in her last illness. One day I brought to her our Bible to show her her name was really registered there, with the date of her death more than twelve years before; and she regarded it with a strange sort of satisfaction.

"You will not alter it," she said, pleadingly; "I died then as a Trenham."

I sat down beside her, and the yellow lamplight glared upon her hollow face, and upon the wasted hand, so long divested of its forfeited badge of wifehood. A change was coming over her; she dozed fitfully, and wandering thoughts began to take possession of her mind.

"If he would only say it," she murmured at intervals. "I want to hear his voice again, 'I only pity you now; I no longer condemn you.' Only he and the Trenhams can condemn me, and little Annie does not. Let me go to him."

She started up, and I held her leaning against me, her long hair floating over us both. She wailed, and moaned, and wept and wrung her hands. She called aloud upon him, and turned despairingly from side to side, with supplicating tones and gestures; and she shivered icily in my arms.

"He will not let me in!" she cried. "It is I who am knocking, Maurice. I am cold, and the night is very stormy; it is so dark; let me in! I want to hear you speak to me. No, I will beat against the door till you open to me. Little Annie is here crying. Are you asleep still?"

Then followed more vehement sobbing.

"He has pushed me out into the cold night," she whispered. "I deserve it; but the storm is very high. See how cold I am. He pushed me out with his strong hands, but he never spoke, and I could not see his face. If he would only say it. God be merciful to us miserable sinners."

She did not speak again, but lay shivering in my arms till the bewildered soul escaped. Margaret Trenham, the innocent maiden, Margaret Lonsdale, the guilty wife, died. And I could only echo her last words from my inmost heart: "God be merciful to us miserable sinners."

I wrote to Dr. Lonsdale, and he came. Together we stood by the unnamed coffin of his wife, whom none but I knew to be his wife. We saw her laid in her obscure grave, with no solemnity of interment beyond my tears of humiliation and ruth, though I knew well that the closing of this grave opened a life of love and happiness to me. We lingered in the sunless cemetery as if reluctant to turn our faces toward that new light dawning brightly for us at last. While standing there, Dr. Lonsdale said:—

"Annie, the night you tell me she died, I was awakened by the sound of someone tapping at my window; softly at first, and

then vehemently. The night was stormy, and the wind wailed and moaned, almost articulately around the house. I fancied I could distinguish the tones of your voice, or Margaret's; the tones of them are the same. I could not compose myself to sleep, and at length the delusion grew so strong that I opened the window, half angry with myself, and drew my hands along the outside. It was very cold, and fairly woke me from my dream; but I could not go to sleep again; I sat up reading poor Margaret's letters. You have not told me anything about her health. Who was with her? Did she speak of me before she died?" Then I told him all.

For many a year the grass has blossomed and faded above them, for each and all have entered into that land where there is neither giving nor taking in marriage; into that sunless land where sorrow and shame are no more.

UNDERGROUND PARIS.

THE catacombs of Paris are of enormous extent. They were originally stone quarries and more than one-tenth of the city's extent is honey-combed by them. Some of them are said to have been in existence for fifteen centuries, but it is only within the last hundred years that they have served for purposes of burial.

Of the old cemeteries of Paris, the largest and most popular was that of the Innocents, comprising not only vaults beneath the church, but great pits for the use of the common people, where hundreds of corpses were buried together. The place became such a hot-bed of disease from over-crowding that successive edicts were issued prohibiting further burial there, but it was continued until the place became really loathsome. In 1780 it was computed that the cemetery was twenty-six feet deep in dead bodies and at that time, after it had been used for nearly seven hundred years, it was closed.

As the site was regarded as a centre of infection, the church was pulled down, and the human remains transferred to the quarries, which received the name of catacombs.

These underground galleries, to which the remains of many other churches have been removed, are under the care of a regular corps of workmen. They have been carefully surveyed, and marked by tablets, so that a skilled person can name the street,

and even the number, above his head. Without such knowledge, however, or lacking a guide, woe be to him who attempts exploring these gruesome labyrinths! In 1793, the porter of a hospital near one of the staircases which lead to the catacombs, undertook an independent tour of discovery. Lantern in hand, he entered those fearful depths but he never returned, and his fate was an absolute mystery until 1804, when some workmen discovered his coat-buttons and a bunch of keys, in one of the passages.

The catacombs may now be visited twice every month, by special permission of the Chief Engineer of Mines. The tour is begun by the descent of a winding staircase, of some ninety steps. On reaching the bottom, the visitor finds himself in a narrow passage three to four feet wide and six high, cut, like the staircase, in solid rock.

Each visitor being provided with a candle, they march along in Indian file. Broad vaulted corridors are traversed, their walls composed of bones stacked upon each other. Indeed, as far as the eye can reach, bones only can be seen in endless succession. Tablets erected at intervals bear the names of the cemeteries from which the remains at that point have been taken, while the sandstone columns supporting the roof are carved with quotations from the Scriptures and other appropriate sources.

THE WRECK OF THE ATLAS.*

A TALE OF THE SEASIDE.

BY RAY THOMPSON.

CHAPTER XI.

SHORTLY after Miss Dorkey's encounter with Artell in the garden, her niece might have been seen stealing forth from the cottage, and hurrying down the path to the gate where she had promised to meet Haldane.

On reaching the spot, Marcia softly opened the gate, and, stepping outside the enclosure, glanced anxiously up and down the road. She experienced a sense of relief at finding no one in waiting, for notwithstanding her agreement with Haldane, the idea of accompanying that gentleman on a secret journey was anything but agreeable to her.

As the moments rolled by without bringing her escort, her heart grew still lighter at the thought of being released from her rash promise. She had waited until she was convinced that Haldane was not going to call for her that evening, and was on the point of returning to the house, when her eyes fell on a bit of white paper lying in the path at her feet.

In an instant it occurred to her that here was something which would explain the mystery of Haldane's absence. Securing the prize, which the darkness forbade her reading in the garden, she hastened back to the cottage, and, posting herself near the sitting-room window, managed to decipher Haldane's penciled scrawl by the aid of the lamplight from within.

Astonished at the nature of the communication; she rushed to the conclusion that her aunt had gained information of the intended meeting, and that she had taken steps to prevent it by herself accompanying the messenger to the trysting place. Instead of blaming Miss Dorkey for her officiousness, Marcia was rather pleased than otherwise at the unexpected turn of affairs. Indeed, as she thrust the note into her pocket, she smiled unconsciously as she pictured the surprise of her lover at finding himself confronted by the determined spinster whom he had always detested.

Turning away from the window, Marcia

heard the heavy tread of Captain Jack who was pacing the piazza in front of the cottage. Shyly she approached the mariner, who on hearing her footstep called out:—

"Is that you, Miss Marcia?"

On her answering in the affirmative, he continued:—

"It's a bad night for young girls to be on deck, and even such a tough old fish of the sea as myself has no business to be prowling around in the darkness when he might be making himself snug and comfortable below. But it's hard teaching an old dog new tricks, Miss Marica. Whenever I hear the wind piping through the trees, and the waves pounding away on the beach as they happen to be this evening, I'm like an old war-horse woke up by the sound of a trumpet, and am as uneasy indoors as a fish in the sand."

"Are we going to have a storm?" Marcia asked, as she joined the mariner on the piazza.

"It's a gale that's coming; though there's no telling whether it will ease itself in rain, or blow itself out as dry as an empty bottle. But whatever happens, you needn't concern yourself. You're safe enough, and so are the fishing boats that came in early this afternoon; so go to bed and to sleep, my dear, and leave me to stand my watch till I get tired, which will be before midnight, I fancy."

Thinking that the captain wished to be alone, Marcia entered the cottage and went straight to her room, where, notwithstanding the excitement of the evening, and her anxiety concerning the absence of her aunt, she managed to remain quiet, though retiring was not to be thought of, and sleep was out of the question.

All night long the wind shrieked through the trees, the ospreys in their rudely shaken nests kept up their wild, unearthly cry, and the surf beat and hammered on the shore; but through and above it all, still shone the clear, steady light of the stars, while below them floated in upon the winds, the mists and the clouds.

It was at the breaking of the day that Marcia, dozing in her chair, was awakened by the discharge of a solitary gun. It sounded so near and distinct that it not only startled the light sleeper, but woke up the whole village. It was presently followed by a second report, and at intervals by others. Then was heard the sound of a hurried tramping to the shore by all who lived either in farmhouse or cabin, for the booming guns told of a wreck; of life to be saved, to some; of plunder and salvage, to others.

Captain Jack had already left the house when he heard Marcia calling to him from her chamber window.

"May I go with you?" she asked, as if fearing a refusal.

"Yes, my girl, and thank you for your company. See the people hurrying across the fields; there isn't a soul left in the village. Our neighbors can scent a wreck in the air, I believe."

They hurried on with the rest, Marcia holding the captain's arm, and occasionally casting quick, timid glances on either hand. The people were making for the Cape, from whence the noise of the gun proceeded. It was a long walk, but Marcia reached it in time to see the boat-house on the beach below surrounded by a crowd of fishermen, mad with the excitement of the perilous adventure. The people of the village had built a fire on the headland, and there they stood or sat huddled about it in picturesque groups, generally silent, looking off to where a large ship lay hard and fast on Stony Point. The craft was evidently an emigrant ship, for about her decks and lower rigging, which the sea almost constantly washed, clung her helpless passengers and crew, as thick as bees around a hive. She had come on broadside to the bar, at that dark and treacherous hour before dawn. She was strained badly, yet she still held together above decks, though occasionally the receding waves showed an ugly break in her hull amidships.

Leaving Marcia on the Cape, Captain Jack hurried down to the beach, where his arrival produced something like order in the noisy crowd.

"Hello, men!" he shouted, mounting a rock and hailing the fishermen in a voice that might have been heard on board the doomed ship. "I daren't order you to launch the lifeboat in this sea, though it's your duty

to try and get a line to that ship. It's a desperate service, but I'm bound to undertake it, and now, who'll go with me!"

Women who had husbands in the crowd, hung about the men, entreating and forbidding them to venture. But in more than one rough breast the sense of duty was stronger than the love of wife or child. A score of hardy fellows volunteered to go with Captain Jack to the bottom of the sea if need be. In obedience to his orders the door of the boat-house was flung open, the lifeboat was run out, and, leaping in their places, the men quietly poised their oars in the air, and sat solemnly watching the mountainous waves over which they were to be hurled.

Captain Jack was the last to enter the boat. Standing erect at the tiller, with his gray locks streaming in the wind and the salt water glistening on his bronzed cheeks, he pointed across the seething foam to where the wreck lay grinding on the rocks, and said:—

"My lads, we're going to risk our lives in an attempt to board that ship. We've got to meet death sooner or later, and I, for one, had rather face it while trying to save the lives of helpless women and children, than to skulk on shore in a time like this, and die at last like a rat in a hole. I see you all feel as I do about it, so now, if you're ready, stand by to drop your oars the instant I give the word."

Despite the desolation of the scene, the men raised a hoarse cheer. Half a hundred strong hands seized the boat and tried to launch her, unsuccessfully at first, but on the third trial she was sent driving into the breakers, and the next moment was thrown high and dry upon the beach, smashed like an eggshell; her crew safe, but all hands more or less bruised and hurt. Captain Jack gathered himself up with the rest, and walked away sick at heart, not noticing the blood dripping freely from his fingers.

But Marcia was at his side in an instant, binding up his wound with her dainty handkerchief which the mariner lost in five minutes afterward.

"Is there no hope for those poor people, Captain Jack?" she asked, her wet, passionate eyes scanning his rugged features as if seeking consolation.

"It's no use, Miss Marcia. That ship is doomed. She'll go down before our eyes, and we can't help it. I'm mighty sorry,

but no man can do anything to save those poor souls out yonder."

"Here's a chap that's goin' to try it, anyway," said Tom Bagley, who had approached them in time to hear the Captain's last remark.

The skipper turned and stared at the young man in amazement. "You don't know what you are talking about," he said, sternly.

"P'r'aps I don't; but my dory lays a hundred yards above the wreck, an' the tide's runnin' out. If I can git outside the first breakers, I can drift down to the ship without scarcely pullin' a stroke; so if you'll get a light line up there to my boat, I'll agree to carry it to the wreck if it's a possible thing."

"You *might* get safely off," said the skipper, dubiously, "but have you counted the risk?"

"Of course I haven't, no more'n you had when you piled into that old lifeboat; but you was bound to try it, an' so am I."

"You're a brave lad, Tom, and I'll get the line and help you all I can; but remember, you're undertaking a desperate job," said Captain Jack, as he hurried away.

No sooner had he disappeared, then the young fisherman turned to Marcia.

"If I don't come back, Miss Thornton, I want you to tell Susan Hanson that almost the last thing I did afore startin' on this racket was to deny settin' that fire. Tell her I've wanted to speak to her about it hundreds of times, but was ashamed to meet her after comin' out of prison. Maybe she'll believe the story if you tell it to her when I'm out of the way."

Before Marcia could reply, Tom Bagley had turned on his heels, and was running up the beach to where his dory was lying, surrounded by a crowd of fishermen.

"I've run a bigger resk'n this, just for fun," he said, as he stripped to the waist before entering the frail craft. "Hurry up, cap'n, an' git me started afore too many people come 'round. If I'm washed on the beach, send the women folks away. I don't want 'em starin' at me if I'm unlucky enough to come ashore with sand in my mouth."

As the young fellow stepped into the boat, Captain Jack wrung his hand convulsively.

"God bless you, Tom, he said. "Whether you come back alive or dead there's not a

man here that won't remember you always as the bravest lad that ever pulled an oar."

"It's all right, anyway," said Tom. "My life ain't so much value that I need be over'n above careful of it, an' whatever happens, I shall have squared all accounts."

While speaking, he had taken his seat in the dory. Two men seized the boat on either side, while Captain Jack, with the line in his hands, stood ready to give the word:—

"Now, then!" he shouted, as a giant breaker came thundering in on the beach.

As the wave receded, the men ran out with it till they stood breast-high in the water. Then with a parting shoot they released the boat, and scrambled back to the beach.

Another wave reared its awful crest and poised itself for the break upon the shore. But the boat did not return with it, and a cry of joy went up from the spectators as they saw the line slowly begin to uncoil itself, and glide through the captain's hands.

Then the skipper spoke: "Thank God, men, he has cleared the breakers!"

He had, and was thus far safe. The women came down to the shore and stood where the spray dashed over them, watching with anxious eyes the tiny craft as it drifted rapidly down upon the wreck. It reached the ship at last, and they saw a man dragged up from among her head rigging, and heard the passengers and crew shout out their joyful cry of deliverance.

An answering cheer went up from the crowd on the beach, while Captain Jack, assisted by a hundred willing hands, began making preparations for landing the shipwrecked people.

The last strong cable having been drawn to the ship, it was no sooner hauled taut and secured, than away spun the life-car to the wreck. In five minutes it was back again, full of mothers with their babies on their breasts. The fish-wives crowded around the poor creatures, comforting them, and trying to show them by all the kind ways they knew, how they rejoiced over the rescue.

Meanwhile, the sturdy fishermen hauled the life-car to and from the ship, until the beach was thronged with passengers who owed their deliverance to the heroic exploit of a single man.

CHAPTER XII.

THE strangers reported that the name of the lost ship was the *Atlas*. She had sailed from Liverpool for New York with three hundred passengers on board, and had been driven on shore in the darkness and the storm, when her voyage was nearly ended.

This account, together with further particulars of the wreck, was given to Captain Jack by a young man who was one of the last passengers to come on shore.

"It's little I care for myself," said the speaker turning his handsome face to the wreck which was beginning to show signs of breaking up; "I've lost nothing that will inconvenience me in the least; but many of these poor people, I fear, can hardly say as much. There's an Italian opera company, for instance, whose wardrobes were valuable. The members have lost everything, and are landed penniless on this coast. We must assist them in getting to New York, where they were to begin their engagement."

"*Marcia*," called out the skipper, beckoning to his charge, who came in answer to the summons. "This gentleman tells me that some of these people need assistance. You are able to help them, I know, and—what the d—l does this mean!" he cried abruptly, as he saw the stranger seize *Marcia* in his arms, and plant a resounding kiss on her white, upturned face.

"It's all right, my friend," said the stranger, coolly, while *Marcia's* smiling countenance vouched for the truth of his assertion. "My name is Walter Conroy, and I have known this girl for a long time. We were engaged before I started for Europe, and now I've returned safely, we're going to be married without loss of time."

"You seem to be taking a good deal for granted, young fellow," said the perplexed skipper; "but this is no time for explanations. *Marcia*, take your friend—or whatever you call him—up to the house. I'll be there myself as soon as I see the last of this wrecking business, and then, sir,"—with a keen glance at the stranger,—"*I* shall be glad to hear anything you may have to say."

"Walter told you the truth, Captain Jack," *Marcia* murmured, as she stole to the skipper's side and slipped her little hand into his brown paw.

"I believe you!" ejaculated the amazed mariner. "By the great horn spoon," he added, "This is the strangest thing I've experienced since the day my mother put me into breeches. But go home, *Marcia*, and tell your story to my wife. It will take a pilot in petticoats to get you out of this scrape, I'm thinking."

Captain Jack's advice was immediately acted upon, and an hour later, *Marcia* had told her secret to good Mrs. Wilburt, whose sympathy was at once enlisted in her behalf.

As for Walter, he seemed to look upon the whole affair as already settled.

"Providence influenced me to start for home in that old sailing craft," he said to *Marcia*, "and Providence drove her ashore on this coast, and brought me to you. Now that Providence has done so much for me, I feel capable of doing the rest of the business myself; so whatever may be done or said by our parents, we'll be married at the earliest possible opportunity."

He had barely finished speaking when Captain Jack made his appearance. The mariner's face was grave as he said: "I've had plenty of business to look after on the beach. I've scolded everybody, and I'm afraid I've sworn at some of the men; but we've been having exciting times. Another disaster has just happened in plain sight of the shore. A yacht, while trying to run in, has been capsized, and her people drowned. One of the bodies has come ashore, and it is that of our acquaintance, Mr. Haldane."

Upon hearing this *Marcia* gave a little cry and buried her face in Mrs. Wilburt's lap. After a while, she told them, in a voice choked with emotion, how narrowly she had escaped Haldane's machinations.

Her narrative was interrupted by the sound of wheels, as a carriage drew up before the cottage. In another moment the door opened, and Miss Dorkey flounced into the room.

"Why, aunt, where have you been?" cried *Marcia*, forgetting her shame and grief in her joy at seeing her relative.

"Don't ask me," said the new-comer as she sank into a chair and removed her crushed hat. "I've been deceived, abducted, abused and insulted by that miscreant, Arthur Haldane, who shall be made to suffer for his conduct, as sure as I am spared to prosecute him."

"His case has been carried to a higher court," said Captain Jack, solemnly; and he

explained that Haldane's body was at that moment lying on the beach.

"I suppose it's the best thing that could have happened to him, though I should have preferred exposing him first," said the vindictive spinster. Then she related her strange adventure, while her listeners sat overwhelmed with surprise.

At the conclusion of the tale, Captain Jack arose and said: "I'm going to telegraph for Mr. Thornton. It strikes me that this is a time when he ought to be on deck."

"I shall be most happy to meet my intended father-in-law," said Walter; while Marcia followed the skipper from the room.

"What do you think of him?" she asked, as with blushing cheeks she confronted the mariner in the hall.

"What do I think of who?"

"Of Walter."

"He seems as honest-hearted as a wooden nutmeg and as straightforward as a sword-fish," said the skipper.

"And you'll meet father on the way, and tell him all that's happened?"

"I shall be likely to," said Captain Jack. With which assurance he patted the cheek of the fair diplomat, and hurried from the house.

After his departure, the inmates of the cottage strolled out on the Cape to view the wreck. Upon their arrival, they found the ship broken up, while the sea was strewn and the shore lined with bits of floating cargo and wreckage. It was a sad sight, and one that they did not care to dwell upon. As they were turning away, Marcia saw in the distance a female form kneeling by a dark object on the beach. In answer to her inquiry, an old fish-wife said:—

"The woman is one o' them furrin' singers, who says she was Mr. Haldane's wife. Ever since the body came ashore she's stayed by it, and can't be coaxed away. The coroner'll be along soon to look after it, an' then I s'pose the poor creeter'll have to give it up."

Slowly the party returned to the cottage, where they passed the remainder of the day in reviewing the many strange happenings which had combined to make the past few hours the most eventful period of their lives.

It was near the hour of sunset when the arrival of the stage-coach brought them all to the window, and sent Marcia flying down the path to meet a portly, middle-aged gen-

leman who had alighted, and was surveying the cottage with an air of friendly interest.

"There, there, my dear," he said in a whisper as he kissed the excited girl: "Captain Wilburt has told me the whole story, and you have no need to distress yourself. I shall act for your best good. Wilburt," addressing the skipper who stood near, "let me have a moment's private conversation with Mr. Conroy. My time is limited, you know."

Gently disengaging himself from his daughter's embrace, Mr. Thornton hurried indoors and was shown into the parlor, where for nearly an hour he remained closeted with his daughter and his prospective son-in-law. At the conclusion of the interview, the young couple came forth with radiant faces, and Marcia informed Mrs. Wilburt, in strict confidence, that "Papa Thornton was one of the best men in the world."

Captain Jack was next summoned. As he entered the parlor, Mr. Thornton said with that curt, business-like air which becomes men of his stamp so well:—

"Now, then, captain, I've settled matters with the young folks, what can I do for you?"

"Nothing," was the instant reply.

"But there must be some way of rewarding you for your kindness," persisted the merchant.

The skipper's countenance brightened. There's Tom Bagley," he said, "the chap who carried the line to the wreck; you might do something for him."

Producing his check-book. Mr. Thornton tore out a blank and handed it to the captain, saying:—

"Fill that out for whatever sum may be necessary to buy the young man the best fishing schooner on this coast. If I can be of further assistance to him, let me know."

Captain Jack took the check, and looking the merchant steadily in the eye, said: "You were always a generous man in money matters, Mr. Thornton, but you don't need to be told that there are certain things money can't buy. Your daughter's happiness is one of them. I hope you have taken measures to secure it."

A frown appeared on the merchant's face as he replied: "I have humbled myself to the extent of consenting to her marriage with Walter Conroy, if that is what you mean."

"But you must do it cheerfully," continued the mariner. "You mustn't serve our young friends as old Cap'n Peabody served a ship's crew in Callao. You see"——

"My friend," interrupted Mr. Thornton, rising and clapping the speaker on the shoulder, "consenting to this marriage has been one of the hardest things I ever did in my life; but I would rather sacrifice my pride a thousand times than listen to one of your long-winded sea-stories; so if you have nothing further to say, and the coach is ready to take me back to Plainville, I will bid you good-by. I have arranged for Marcia and my sister to accompany me, and I am sure they must be ready for the journey by this time."

While speaking, he had stepped into the hall where the ladies were already in waiting. Their trunks had been strapped up behind the coach, and they had only to bid adieu to Captain Wilburt and his wife, and follow the bustling merchant to the carriage.

"Good-by, Miss Donkey," said the captain as he helped the spinister into the carriage.

"My name, sir, is *Dorkey*," she replied, as she slammed the door in his face.

"But your nature is donkey for all that," was his answer. "There she goes," he added as the lumbering vehicle rolled away, "the crossdest old vixen that ever escaped drowning. But Miss Marcia's kindness ought to make me forget there's such a thing as a spiteful woman in the world. I tell you, young man, you've won a greater prize than you could have gained by raising the richest treasure ship that ever sunk in the sea."

Walter Conroy's countenance was lighted by a rare smile as he answered:—

"I believe you, captain; and I shall never forget that no small share of my present good fortune is due to you"——

"And to Tom Bagley," interposed the skipper.

"And to the wreck of the *Atlas*," concluded Mrs. Wilburt; and she gazed mournfully in the direction of the ocean, whose hollow roar was heard in the distance as if uttering a sullen protest against the happiness to which it had unwittingly contributed.

[THE END.]

THE STORY OF THE YEAR.

BY LUCY LANCOM.

SPRING.

NO matter what the almanac may say,
The year begins with the first month of
Spring,
When snowdrifts into rivulets slip away,
And bluebirds of the coming violets sing;

When March winds sweep the stairway of the rocks
From rubbish heaps of Autumn leafage clear;
And the sun turns back from the equinox
To welcome and lead home the baby Year.

The baby's name is Spring. Around her feet
Quaint ferns their scrolls unroll, and mosses rare
With coral fairy cups steal down to meet
Her winsome footsteps on the woodland stair.

SUMMER.

Three breezy steps, and on a sunlit floor
Bordered with daisies, roses and green grass,
The maiden Year, at Summer's open door
Hears music summoning up a mountain pass.

And on she climbs. Soft strains the thickets thrill;
Elusive fairy visions flit beyond;
The forest path invites her upward still;
Light tendrils cling to her with touches fond.

O the enchanted world! O youth! O June!
No wonder that the heart cannot forget
Those morning melodies, that first-learned tune!
Through deepening harmonies they haunt her yet!

AUTUMN.

A woman moving up the orchard slope,
With even gait and steady, seeking eyes.
Autumn, that ripens all things, ripens hope;
Trees bear fruit every month in Paradise.

September, standing on her golden round
Of the year's ladder, 'mid her vintage leaves,
Hears through her harvest fields a wail resound;
Her starving sisters begging for her sheaves.

Autumn did but enrich herself to give;
And, scattering blessings, see her now depart,
Whispering that on life's hills 'twas sweet to live,
While Indian Summer sunshine warms her heart.

WINTER.

December's sun is low; the year is old;
Through falling leaves and flying flakes of snow
The aged pilgrim climbs the mountain cold,
But look! the summit's in the afterglow!

The fierce winds hold their breath; the rocks give way;
The stars look down to guide her up the height;
And all around her lonely footsteps play
Auroral waves of spiritual light.

Nothing before her but the peak, the sky!
Nothing? Ah, look! beyond is everything;
Over these mountains greener valleys lie;
A happier New Year, an eternal Spring.

MY FIRST PATIENT.

BY F. A. STANDISH.

“**A**ND may I beg you to visit us in your private rather than in your professional capacity? Since my dear wife has been failing thus sadly, she has evinced a great dread of medical men; and were she to guess you other than an ordinary guest, I tremble for the consequences! The carriage will meet you at Blackburne station at whatever hour you name. Yours very truly,
“ARTHUR CRAWFORD.”

This is an extract from a letter that I received on the 10th of June, 1880, and being but a young fellow of twenty-six, I was very much elated thereby. The great drawback to being what is called a specialist is that the generality of people—for what reason I have never been able to discover—are afraid to employ you until you are well on in years, and consequently this Mrs. Crawford, for whom my services had been enlisted, was my first private patient. My specialty was madness; and tiring equally of hospital-work and of idling in my own rooms, I was heartily thankful for the good luck that had befallen me. In a previous letter, Mr. Crawford had given a detailed account of his wife's symptoms; and now all arrangements were completed, and I was due at his Berkshire home on the following day.

When the train steamed into the little country station, I found a carriage and pair ready to meet me. Evidently, to judge by the general get-up of the whole thing, the Crawfords were wealthy folk; and this impression was confirmed when we reached the house, which was standing in the midst of a lovely park. In true country fashion the hall doors were standing open, and my host met me on the threshold with outstretched hands.

“This is exceedingly kind of you,” he said, genially, “for I know you have come at your very earliest convenience. Journey from town pleasant? Yes? That's right. James, take Mr. Lennox's things to his room. Lunch in the morning-room? Come along, my dear sir; you must be half famished.” So saying, he preceded me down a long corridor, whence I caught distant

glimpses of a beautiful garden at the back of the house, and into a snug little room where luncheon was laid. While I discussed a cold chicken, Mr. Crawford went on chatting; and ere I went to my room for a wash and brush up before presenting myself to his wife, we were excellent friends. I do not think I ever met a man who so much charmed me at first sight; nay, he more than charmed, he captivated me. He was about thirty, and exceedingly handsome, with fair, curly hair, and bright blue eyes. He had a bronzed complexion, and a hearty laugh, and was altogether a most attractive specimen of a man. When I had finished luncheon, his manner changed abruptly as he began speaking of his young wife.

“I did not like to enter upon the subject before you were rested,” he began, courteously, “but I am intensely anxious you should see her. For some months past she has been suffering from intense melancholia, and lately she has taken a deep distrust of those around her; more particularly of me.” He stopped abruptly and bit his lip. “Doctor, I simply worship her,” he went on, passionately. “When I married her, five years ago, she was the blithest, merriest girl in all the town; and now, to see her like this—why, it breaks my heart!” and he dropped into a chair and buried his face in his hands.

There was an awkward pause, for in those days I was too inexperienced to be much of a hand at consolation; and then I stepped nearer to him and laid my hand upon his shoulder. “Come, come,” I said, cheerily, “there is no need to despair like this; we must hope for the best. How does she show her distrust of you?”

He raised his head to answer me. “By keeping the boy from me, for one thing. She will hardly let me touch him.”

“The boy? A son of yours?”

“Our only child,” he answered, “a dear little fellow of nearly four; and she betrays a terrible fear whenever I have him with me.”

“Does she eat well?”

“Hardly at all.”

“Sleep at night?”

He shook his head; and then followed a string of various professional questions. Our conversation at an end, I requested to be shown to my room, promising to be in the drawing-room for five o'clock tea, when I should be introduced to Mrs. Crawford.

"As Mr. Lennox, if you please," suggested her husband, as we crossed the hall. "You remember that I asked you to drop the doctor, and seem an ordinary visitor?"

Of course I agreed, and then he told me he had spoken to her of me as an old college friend; and finally he left me to myself.

When I descended to the drawing-room, I found both Crawford and his wife waiting for me. He was standing by the open window, playing with the climbing roses that were nodding by its sill; he was talking merrily as I entered, and looked the personification of life and good spirits. A girl was standing by the mantel-shelf with her back towards me, and I had barely time to admire the slight figure and graceful pose, before Crawford's voice rang out in hearty cordiality.

"Ah! there you are at last! Let me introduce you to my wife. Beatrice, this is Mr. John Lennox."

She had half turned when he began speaking; but as he said my name, she gave a sudden gasp and confronted me with large startled eyes. I have seen the eyes of a snared bird and those of a hunted stag, but I have never seen such a look of piteous fear as dwelt in hers then. For one moment she seemed half mad with terror; but the next it fled as quickly as it came, and she held out her hand in greeting. As she did so, an ugly scar on the smooth white wrist caught my eye. It looked to me like an unskillful but intentional cut from a knife, and while we were exchanging commonplaces as to my journey, I was wondering as to whether she had ever attempted her own life. She was in the first flush of her womanhood; and her glorious blue eyes and coil of auburn hair would alone have sufficed to stamp her as a beautiful woman, had it not been that the curious expression of her face outweighed every other fascination. She gave me the impression of being literally consumed by a terrible dread, to the nature of which I of course as yet held no clew; and with this dread, an equally strong desire to suppress all outward indication of it. Add to this, the fact that her face was entirely colorless, that the hand

she had given me, in spite of the June sunshine, was as cold as ice, it will be seen that my first case promised to be full of interest.

She poured out the tea silently, while her husband and I went on chatting, and she did not speak again until he proposed to ring the nursery bell.

"We have not seen Bertie all day," he added, "and I know you would like to show him off to Lennox."

"He is having his tea," she rejoined quickly. "Show him off in the morning, Arthur; I don't think we want him now."

"Oh, fie! There is an unkind mamma! I wonder what Bertie would say to you? He can finish his tea here, dear. I'll fetch him."

"No, no; I'll go." She ran out of the room as she spoke; and Crawford turned to me with a weary-looking smile.

"You see, Lennox? I generally give way; but I am afraid of it growing upon her, if I never see the child. He is such a splendid fellow!" As he spoke, his wife returned with the boy in her arms.

"I met him in the hall," she explained; "he was just coming in from his walk. No, Arthur, don't take him; he is not at all heavy." This last to her husband, who had advanced with outstretched hands. "Look here, Bertie, darling; who likes cake?" She seated herself on a low chair, still keeping a jealous arm around the child, and went on talking, this time to me. "Arthur and I quarrel over this small boy." She laughed a little, but it sounded mirthless. "The last cause of dissension is his health. I think he is growing delicate and wants change, and papa doesn't agree; does he, my beauty?"

The boy laughed as she held him yet more closely to her; and looking at his rosy cheeks and bright eyes, it seemed to me that there could not be a healthier youngster.

"I am afraid I must take papa's side," I said. "You must not alarm yourself unnecessarily, dear Mrs. Crawford, for I think"—I stopped abruptly, alarmed by the expression on her face. I was new at my work, be it remembered; but I think that older men than I would have been frightened. Bertie had rebelled against the detaining arm, and sliding on to the floor, had run to his father and climbed into his arms.

A fine game of romps now ensued, and the mother sat and watched them. Sitting there facing her, I, too, was watching. In my student days, I had kept a tame lizard, and by whistling to it, had been able to direct its movements at will, and now I was reminded of my whilom pet by watching Beatrice Crawford's eyes. Every motion of her husbands, as he ran round the room tossing the laughing boy in his arms, appeared to hold a fascination for her, and her gaze never left him but once. That once was when she walked swiftly to a further table and possessed herself of a paper-knife, which she handed to me, commenting on its curious make. It was of steel and sharply pointed, and I handed it back to her with the remark that it would make an ugly weapon if needed. She took it without glancing at me again; but her husband had caught her words, and now came up to us breathless and laughing, with Bertie clinging round his neck.

"Don't hold that thing, my darling," he said, tenderly. "I hate to see such an ugly knife in your dear little hands."

"Give it to Bertie, mamma," cried the child, stretching dimpled hands for the coveted treasure; and his father, with an injunction to be careful, was taking it from her to give to him, when, with a muffled cry, she snatched the knife back and dashed it through the open window into the garden beyond.

"You sha'n't have it! you sha'n't have it!" she cried, excitedly, while a bright red spot burned on either cheek. "You would"—With marvelous self-control she stopped dead short, and after an almost imperceptible pause, she added, in her usual quiet tones: "Pray forgive me, Arthur; I am so afraid of Bertie hurting himself. Go to your nursery, dear. Mamma will come to you."

Awe-struck at her late passion, the child went gently out of the room, and his mother following him, I was left alone with Crawford. It went to my heart to see the pained, drawn look on his face; but the scene had at all events put one thing beyond a doubt: Mrs. Crawford was not merely failing in brain-power—she was mad.

A couple of days went by, and I became fairly puzzled. All the ordinary verbal tests when applied to my patient proved complete failures. Her memory was excellent, and indeed in this respect she was far better

than her husband, who was constantly forgetting things. As to her judgment, it struck me as above the average, for she was a widely-read woman, and we had a stiff argument one night as to the merits of our favorite authors. She managed her own housekeeping, and capitally she did it, too; and, in fact,—not to exhaust the reader's patience by entering into details,—the only visible outcome of her mental aberration was this extreme terror in which she lived, and for which I could find no reason. (I may remark parenthetically that the mad undoubtedly have rules of their own by which they are influenced. Experience thus teaching me that Mrs. Crawford had some reason for this, to us, inexplicable dread—even though it might be but a fear of her own shadow—it became my business to solve this reason.) What baffled me most was the fact that while it was Crawford himself who primarily excited this terror, she was undeniably fond of him. Indeed, the word "fond" is hardly suitable, for she simply adored him. I never heard him express the slightest wish as to the household arrangements but it was instantly fulfilled; while every whim—and he was the most whimsical of men—was implicitly obeyed. In fact, at the end of a week I was precisely in the same state as when I first entered the house. But that my *amour propre* was piqued, and I felt angry at my non-success, I should have been paying a very enjoyable visit. Arthur Crawford made a capital host; and although, as I have already said, he was a very whimsical man, and was subject to unaccountable fits of depression, he and I got on excellently together.

At the end of the week, something happened which had the double effect of lowering me several inches in my own estimation, and of placing matters in a totally different light. It was an exceedingly hot night, and after we had all gone to bed, I was tempted to leave my room, and seating myself by the open window in the corridor, to indulge in an extra cigar. The fact that it was a fine moonlight night, and that while the corridor window boasted a lovely view, that of my own room looked into the stables, amply justified my choice of a seat. I had been there for perhaps an hour, when I heard the Crawfords talking in their room, which was on a level with my own. The tones were excited and eager; and fearing that Mrs. Crawford might be lashing herself into

a fury, and that her husband might be ignorantly increasing it, I stole down to their door and stood listening.

"Arthur, dear, give it to me; you don't want it to-night. Why not wait until the morning?"

These were the first words that I caught, spoken in Mrs. Crawford's usually gentle tones.

"Give it to you? No, not I. I know a trick worth two of that. Ah, you think I don't know that you and that confounded mealy-mouthed doctor are in league against me."

Crawford's voice, shrill and mocking, but undoubtedly his. Good heavens! was the man drunk? There was a moment's pause, and then he began again, this time more gently.

"Come, come, Beatrice; drop this stupid joking. I only want to have a little cut at Bertie, just a little cut; and look! the knife is so bright and sharp, it cannot hurt him much."

The wall seemed to reel around me as I leaned against it for support. In a flash of revelation that nearly blinded me, as I realized the full horror of the situation, I understood for the first time how matters actually stood. Crawford himself was the madman, and the devoted wife, whom I had been taught to look upon as insane, had known the truth all this time; and knowing it, for some inscrutable woman's reason, had shielded him, perhaps at the cost of her very life. In a moment the meaning of his many whims, his loss of memory, his fits of depression, were made clear to me; and as I thought of the martyrdom through which his girl-wife had passed, I cursed myself for the readiness with which I had been duped.

While these thoughts were rushing through my brain, I had noiselessly opened the outer door, and now stood in the dressing-room, peering into the bedroom beyond. The door between the two was standing open; but a heavy curtain hung in the aperture, and by making a little slit in it by means of my penknife, I was enabled to command a view of the interior. At the farther end of the apartment lay Bertie asleep in his cot. Standing before him, clad in a long white wrapper, and with her auburn hair flowing over her shoulders, was the young mother herself; while at some paces from her stood Crawford, still in evening dress, and balancing in his fingers a

long glittering dagger, that I recognized as one that usually hung in the library below. By this time he had dropped his angry tones, and was speaking in his accustomed pleasant fashion. "You know, dear," he was saying, "it really is necessary that we both drink some. Half a glassful of young and innocent blood, and we both shall keep young and happy forever."

"Won't my blood do?" asked the girl, desperately. She stretched her bare arms towards him and forced a smile to her poor, quivering lips. "You are much fonder of me, aren't you, dear? I shall do much better."

He laughed softly. "No, no, my darling; not you. I wouldn't hurt you for all the gold of all the Indies." He stopped suddenly, as if struck by his own words. "Gold?" he repeated. "Ah! yes, of course, I must have gold. Where did I put it now?"

He retreated a few steps, looking uneasily from side to side.

"Perhaps you left it in the library. Ring for James. Or go to Mr. Lennox, Arthur; he will help you to find it."

He laughed again, a low, monotonous laugh, to which my hospital-work had but too well accustomed me, and then he moved nearer her, still balancing the dagger in his long, nervous fingers. That terrible knife! If he had only put it down for a moment, I could have rushed in and secured it before turning to him; but as matters were, cruel experience taught me that the instant he caught sight of me, he would rush to the child to carry his dreadful purpose into effect, and that the mother in all probability would fall the victim. On the other hand, I dared not quit my post to summon assistance, and so leave Beatrice entirely at his mercy. I glanced round the dressing-room, and the window-cord caught my eye. It was new and strong. I cut it as high as I could reach, and crept back to my hole at the curtain. Crawford was growing rapidly angry.

"Give me that boy!" he cried, roughly. "Get out of the way, Beatrice, and let me have him"; and he caught her by the arm and dragged her from the cot.

"Arthur, Arthur! husband, sweetheart!" She clasped both arms around his neck, and raised imploring eyes to his; but the sight of the thin white face only moved him to greater wrath.

"It is all your fault I have not made you strong long ago," he exclaimed, irritably. "You never laugh now, and you can't sing, and you won't dance."

"Dance? Oh yes, I can. Look, Arthur!" She drew rapidly back towards the cot, speaking in her ordinary quiet voice. "You shall do what you like with Bertie; I was only joking. Only we must have our dance first, you know."

With a sudden movement she stooped and lifted the sleeping child from the bed, talking all the time in an arch, merry voice, that still retained its old power over the poor madman. He nodded approvingly as she began rocking to and fro with the boy in her arms, and he moved a chair or two, to give her more space.

"Dance, Beatrice!" and he began whistling a then fashionable valse, beating time to the air with the dagger, of which he never relinquished his hold.

"Very well," she responded, cheerily. "Stand by the mantel-piece and give us plenty of room. Now then, my baby boy; one, two, and off we go."

My life has shown me instances of self-devotion in plenty; I have seen proofs of ready wit, and more of indomitable pluck; but I have never seen them so marvelously combined as on that terrible June night. Instinct taught me what she meant to do. She had persuaded her husband to stand at the end of the room farthest from the curtain that hid her one means of escape, and now she intended to hazard her only chance, dash through it, lock the door on the other side, and then go for help. Backwards and forwards, round and round, she circled, a weird enough figure in her white draperies. The little white feet were bare, and it taxed her utmost strength to hold the heavy boy in her arms; but with a sublime heroism of which I should never have believed her capable, she never once paused for breath. A miracle alone kept the child asleep; but when I saw the poor mother's lips move dumbly between the snatches of the gay valse she was humming, I felt that she was praying God he might not awaken. Nearer and nearer the curtain she came; but, to my horror, I perceived that Crawford was growing uneasy, and advancing slowly in the rear.

"Mrs. Crawford! Quick!"

There was not a minute to be lost. I tore the curtain aside, and she rushed towards

me; but ere I could fasten the heavy door, her husband was upon us. With a yell of baffled rage, he was tearing after her through the open doorway, and in another moment would have reached her with uplifted knife, when I tripped him up, and he fell headlong to the floor. He was stunned by his fall; and while I fastened his hands and feet by means of the cut window-cord, his wife went back to the inner room and rang loudly for assistance.

Ere he came to himself, Arthur Crawford was safely secured in my own room. Leaving him there under the charge of the men-servants, I went back to seek Mrs. Crawford. She was lying on the bedroom floor, with her nervous fingers still tightly interlaced, and by her side sat her little son, warm and rosy from his broken sleep. He was kissing the paling lips as I came hastily into the room, and now held up a warning finger as I knelt beside them.

"Poor mamma is fast asleep," he whispered. "And she is so cold!"

She was not dead. The long and frightful mental strain through which she had passed brought on brain-fever, and for some days we despaired of her life; but she came through it bravely, and ere the summer waned, I had the satisfaction of installing both mother and son in a seaside cottage, far enough away from her Berkshire home.

Crawford, poor fellow, only lived a few months, for a dangerous fall in the asylum grounds put a merciful termination to his confinement. During those few months, I visited him occasionally, and he always spoke most tenderly of his wife, whom he imagined to be dead.

When he died, I went to break the news to his young widow; and while staying in her pretty Devonshire cottage, I solved much that had puzzled me. Her terror at my first introduction to her had been occasioned by the fact that she had at once recognized me as Lennox, the mad-doctor. I had been pointed out to her in the park the season before. She dreaded Arthur's incipient madness being known to any one, for she had a blind terror of a lunatic asylum in connection with her idolized husband, and hoped that a quiet country life, free from trouble and contradiction, might in time restore him. But had he never broken out before? I asked, for it seemed to me incomprehensible that so slight a frame could be capable of such courage. Once,

she said, only once, and then he had been bent on killing himself. In struggling with him for the possession of the knife, he had accidentally cut her wrist, and so occasioned the ugly scar that disfigured it. As for Bertie's presence on that fatal night, she told me he had always been accustomed to sleep in their room; and as I had refused to second her theory that the child wanted change of air, and so aid in sending him out

of the house, she could devise no other means of getting rid of him.

And then I took my leave; and I have never seen Mrs. Crawford from that day to this. But still, in spite of a certain pair of sweet brown eyes which make the sunshine of my home, I am forced to admit that there is no woman on earth for whom I have such a boundless admiration as for that lady whom I mistook for my First Patient.

A VISIT TO THE PYRAMIDS.

BY DR. CHAS. H. CAMPBELL.

SIX o'clock in the morning found us on the quay at Suez jetty. Even at that early hour we were by no means the only strangers out, and for the next two hours there was a continual accession to our numbers. The only thing that did not arrive was the train, which we fondly hoped was to land us at Cairo by two P. M. Blank dismay was apparent on most faces. The ladies seemed the most cheery, though, to look at their stupendous boxes, with a ball in prospect at night, and apparently small hopes of getting there, they might well have been pardoned if they had given way to their feelings. Not an official was to be seen. The office was open, but no one there, and the only news heard was an alarming rumor that we were to wait until two "specials" for ambassadors had been sent off. However, we were spared that subject of complaint, and at last, about nine A. M. a train was seen coming down from the town.

Hardly had it stopped when it was carried by storm; entreaties, supplications, and threats of the staff who had arrived in it, were of no avail. In a minute every corner was crowded—luggage anywhere, or nowhere—there we were, and there we meant to stop. At last we moved off, but our barometer, which had been rising, experienced a rapid fall when we found ourselves backed into the Suez station, where two trains equally full, were waiting.

How we got off at last I have no idea, but after considerable delay we all started, our train being the last. What were the rules which regulated the traffic, or what they meant to do with us, after all, seemed equal-

ly incomprehensible. Sometimes they would shunt the leading trains and let us pass ahead, reversing the operation at the next station; and what they stopped at all for was a mystery, unless it was to give the natives an opportunity of extracting "bak-sheesh," and the wearied traveler a chance of getting a glass of water, or an orange at about ten times its customary value.

When we started again there was the most delightful jumble, as this was the junction for Alexandria. Very few, if any, wanted to go there; but some did go, as I heard afterwards, against their will. At last we got fairly off, and bending back again to the southward, passed through a country as rich and fertile as the neighboring desert was arid and barren, until, just before sunset, the Pyramids of Ghizeh met the eye, and many of my fellow-travelers, like myself, looked upon them for the first time with wonder and admiration, mixed with awe, as their sharp outlines stood out in strong relief against the evening sky.

The waning twilight soon shut them from our gaze, and at six o'clock we glided into the station at Cairo. How and why we arrived when we did is more than I can tell; however, the blind goddess stuck by us to the last, and my friend and I found ourselves at half-past six sitting down to a capital dinner at one of the best hotels in Cairo—the Hotel de l'Orient, for which we had a billet—while lots of our fellow-travelers were still *en route*.

Many did not arrive till ten P. M., and others kept dropping in until next morning; some of them even had to wander about without anywhere to put their heads, every

place being full. We had a fight for the luggage, not with the railway porters—for the best of all reasons, that there are no such functionaries—but with the drivers and donkey-boys, and ultimately we walked to our hotel with our possessions on two donkeys, and a large retinue clamorous for *baksheesh*. The hotel was so full that they could not give us a room to sleep in, every place even to the floors of the saloon being allotted; but they promised one for the morrow, and a room near at hand could be secured in a private house if we liked to pay ten francs apiece for a bed—but of this more anon. We at once accepted the bargain, and took possession in the course of the evening.

It was up a huge gateway, in a very narrow and particularly noisy bazaar; but as there were mosquito-curtains, and it was tolerably clean, we thought ourselves very well-off. The landlady was a hideous old Frenchwoman, with a fat and rather bedizened daughter.

I spent some long days this week—this was a day and a half, and very glad I was to crawl under my curtains; but, though I defeated the machinations of the mosquitoes to keep me awake, a band in the bazaar did murder sleep for a long time. Either exhausted nature or exhausted trumpeters at last allowed me a few precious moments, and it really did not seem as if I had had half an hour's rest when a wretched dragoman stumbled into our room—at half-past four, 22nd November—to say the noble steeds were at the door, destined to bear us, under his guidance, to the Pyramids. There was nothing for it but to growl and go.

The coldest part of the night comes, they say, just before dawn, and certainly there was no deviation from the rule on this particular morning, for it was very cheerless. As we approached the Nile, a raw fog came rising off its waters into the narrow streets and lanes of the suburb which connects Cairo with the river.

It was just getting into a gray twilight when we reached the river, which we had to cross in a boat. There was a ferry, apparently, as there was an office where tolls were taken, and the usual scene which takes place when money passes between Egyptains occurred—a regular row, in which our dragoman, the toll-collector, and innumerable boatmen took part. How they settled it

I cannot say, but I think the dragoman had the best of it; and, after some time, ourselves and our donkeys together with four Italians and their steeds, were safely embarked in one of the ordinary large-decked boats of the river.

With considerable noise we shoved off into the stream, and were in due time safely landed on the other side, the donkeys showing a decided preference for getting out of rather than into the boat. This was our first sight of the Nile, and although not, perhaps, altogether to its advantage, the gray light of the early morning gave it an appearance of vagueness and size which a later view dispelled.

Before, however, we got fairly *en route* again, the first beams of the sun were beginning to disperse the gloom, bringing into light more distant points which had been hitherto undefinable, the building enclosing the Nilometer and the adjacent palace forming prominent objects in the landscape.

After passing through a village and a grove of palms, we crossed the railway to Upper Egypt, and got into a capital new road, which the Viceroy had made to enable his guests to go to the Pyramids with more ease than the state of the country—still partially covered by the receding inundation—would otherwise have allowed. There was, in fact, on the top of an embankment, some thirty feet wide, a regular road, with trees planted on either side, along which our donkeys went very cheerily, my quad, with two hundred pounds on his back, going quite at his ease.

The distance from the river to the Pyramids is about five miles, over a flat, fertile country in which they form the principal feature. Without architectural beauty there is something very striking in their appearance, and when full in view they grow upon you till at their base you realize their grandeur and immensity; looking up at them they are overwhelming, and though shorn of their earliest splendor (for originally they were cased with marble), there is something very imposing and grand in their simplicity. They seem the very personification of power; and, strange and mysterious like their unknown history, they impress the visitor with awe and wonder. How little, indeed, is known about them! They have stood for four thousand years, and may, if time lasts, stand as much longer, for no signs of decay are visible, except where

man's curiosity has interfered with their original integrity. Who built them? What appliances had they for transporting and lifting such enormous masses? Where were the science and skill attained which gave such mechanical strength and accurate fitting? and, above all, for what purpose were they erected?

Such were one's musing thoughts, and such have been the thoughts of thousands—perhaps millions—who have beheld them with even less knowledge than the scientific research of the last fifty years has brought to light. I could almost go with Piazzi Smyth, who assigns the Great Pyramid to Divine agency, although I can hardly follow him in his views as to its being a standard of weights and measures, though in his book he has very charmingly wrought out the theory. The astronomical part of his view is especially interesting.

The inside of the Pyramid is as wonderful as the outside; the inclination of the passages, the concealed but perfectly ventilated King's Chamber, with the porphyry bath, or sarcophagus, if it may be so called; the wonderful finish of the masonry; the security of access—all instance some great purpose, and the mind is lost in conjecture as to what it may have been. One thing alone seems clear: whatever that purpose was, it fulfills it still; perhaps—although it may be presumptuous to say so in an age like this—only to be known in that day “when all secrets shall be revealed.”

Any lengthened description of the Pyramids, and of the temples below the level of their base which have been excavated in late years, is as much beyond me as it is unnecessary, there being many standard works in which they have been described and fully discussed.

I must not omit to mention the Sphinx. I was really very much struck with it; and it seemed to me a fitting accompaniment to the place, couching at the feet as a guard to its wondrous companions; but I could not by any means realize the glowing descriptions that had been written about the sublime repose and mysterious beauty of the face.

It wants, I suppose, a more poetical imagination than I possess, and I was very much inclined to laugh, remembering what I had read, and contrasting it with what I saw.

It was past ten o'clock when my friend and I sat down to make our breakfast, under the shade of one of the angular sides of the

Great Pyramid, and we agreed that we had been well repaid for our early ride.

If we could only have got rid of the Arabs, we should have been happy; but these vagabonds destroy one's pleasure. From the time of a traveler's arrival until his departure, there is one incessant round of quarreling and attempt at extortion. Not content with the authorized plunder through their sheik, their whole object is by worrying, or bullying, to get an additional payment as *baksheesh* to themselves individually.

Our dragoman wisely advised us to leave our money at home, and stipulated that we should make no payments except through him, and by this arrangement, and firmness of bearing (with some help perhaps from the sight of a stout ash stick I usually carry), we at last got rid of them, the appearance of some fresh victims, who arrived as we were preparing to mount, accelerating their departure.

If Ismail would only exterminate these Ishmaelites, as his grandfather did the Mamlooke, I do not think anyone would object.

The route affords a very good idea of the cultivated country of Lower Egypt, and of the importance and wonderful effect of the inundation of the Nile. Canals and water-courses crossed in every direction, and wherever the waters had receded sufficiently to give a footing, fellaheen were to be seen splashing through the soft alluvial soil, sowing seed broadcast.

The deposit looks like rich black mud, and wherever it covers the sand a boglike earth is formed, resembling the stuff we put into garden-beds for azaleas and rhododendrons. Cotton and sugar-cane, with maize and Indian corn, seemed to be the principal crops in cultivation, while the quantity of date-palms told of the land of the Arab and the Desert. We re-crossed the river much as we crossed, except in having to pole up a long way against the current, to enable us to fetch our landing on the other side. Some little difficulty about the *entree*, and the wish to get back pretty early, prevented our visiting the Nileometer.

They say it is now just as Herodotus described it, but (though three thousand years is a respectable antiquity) it is a juvenile compared to the Pyramids of Ghizeh. We were very glad to get to the hotel about one, but too tired to go to the races held in the afternoon at the Abassieh.

The Viceroy and his guests were there, but it was a very tame affair; a feeble copy of a French meeting, which is not saying much for it. The only fun was a dromedary-race, and that, as the pace was only about six miles an hour, was not very exciting. A far more animating scene took place when my friend went to remove his traps to the hotel from our lodging, mine having come quietly beforehand. The question of payment for our night's lodging was not raised until his were removed. The old Frenchwoman demanded five pounds instead of a napoleon, and, assisted by the stout daughter, tried to impound the portmanteaus.

At last, after a pitched battle, my friend, assisted by the dragoman (who had hovered on the skirts of the fight), issued triumphant with bag and baggage, leaving the old lady on the floor, and the young one shouting for the police. He had, indeed, some fear of the *cadi*; but the landlord of the hotel, who made the bargain, went in and settled it.

The evening was spent in rambling about the bazaars, brilliant with illuminations, and with an hour at the opera, to which the Khedive and his guests went in state. It was a very elegant and commodious house, said to have cost \$400,000, and there was a tolerable opera and a very good ballet. I did not stay long, for after forty-three hours of excitement, out of which three only had been spent in bed, I felt the want of rest, and enjoyed my capital bed and very comfortable apartment at the Hotel de l'Orient, in which I was now located.

I remained for three days longer at Cairo, and saw all the usual sights—Joseph's Well, the tombs of the Khalifs, the Museum at Boulak, the Great Mosque, the scene of the

quaint, thoroughly Eastern bazaars, and the magnificent view from the Imambarrah, where I went every afternoon to see the sun set.

I hoped to have accomplished a visit to the ancient Heliopolis, the Ruins of Memphis, and the Pyramids of Sakarah, but from the state of the country, was unable to accomplish it, the roads being generally broken up by the inundation. From the citadel one could see how generally this affects the country.

The view was, indeed, exceedingly interesting. In one unbroken sweep for three parts of the circle you see a highly cultivated country intersected in every direction with canals, the Nile flowing in a grand volume across it; the city itself, with its picturesque mosques and countless minarets, forming an inside ring, as it were, of which your standpoint is the centre. In the distance beyond the Nile loomed up the gigantic forms of the Pyramids, and as far as the eye could reach in the middle distance were the smaller and more numerous Pyramids of Sakarah. Behind you the panorama was closed by a range of sand-hills, bringing the Desert up to the very gates of Cairo.

The most beautiful effect, however, was that of the setting sun, throwing its slanting beams on the towers and minarets of the city, lighting up the scene with a rosy glow, and the extraordinary appearance given by it to the Pyramids themselves.

As the sun set, its edge almost touched the Great Pyramids, and the change from the flood of crimson light in which they glowed, showing each line and angle with wonderful accuracy, to a black sombre mass, as the sun sank below the horizon, was very striking.

THE DAUGHTER.

BY J. B. S.

MY little daughter grows apace;
Her dolls are now quite out of date;
It seems that I must take their place.

We have become such friends of late,
We might be ministers of state
Discussing projects of great peril,
Such strange new questionings dilate
The beauty of my little girl.

How tall she grows! What subtle grace
Doth every movement animate;
With garments gathered for the race
She stands, a goddess slim and straight.
Young Artemis, when *she* was eight—
Among the myrtle-bloom and laurel—

I doubt if she could more than mate
The beauty of my little girl.

The baby passes from her face,
Leaving the lines more delicate,
Till in her features I can trace
Her mother's smile, serene, sedate.
'Tis something at the hands of fate
To watch the onward years unfurl
Each line which goes to consecrate
The beauty of my little girl.

ENVY.

Lord, hear me, as in prayer I wait.
Thou givest all; guard Thou my pearl;
And when Thou countest at the gate
Thy jewels, count my little girl.

BLANCHE BERESFORD'S CHRISTMAS.

BY ANASTASIA DEVERAUX.

"**A**RE we near Marston Station now?" I asked very timidly of my opposite companion, with whom a few civilities had been exchanged during a somewhat long railway-journey, performed in a second-class carriage.

"We shall be there almost directly," she answered, briskly. "You are glad, I dare say, for it has been a tiring day for you."

"Yes," I replied, doubtfully, feeling inwardly a sensation little akin to gladness; for, though I was going home in one sense of the word, having no other place to call by that name, I had never been to Marston before. I was going as a stranger to accept a shelter from relatives I had never seen, going with dread and uncertainty too; for, though my Aunt Vereker's letter had contained the promise of a welcome, how could I be sure that she really meant it? How could I divine whether my cousins would not regard me in the light of an intruder and interloper as well? But I had no choice in the matter. All had been hurriedly settled and arranged, almost before I had realized that I was to leave my old home and go out amongst new friends and strange faces.

It had not frightened me so much at first, simply because I was just then so overwhelmed with grief at the loss of my mother that nothing seemed to affect me. I let my friends do what they liked, and decide as they thought best; so it had been agreed to accept Aunt Vereker's offer; and, in accordance with her directions, I had left Aberystwith by an early train, and was now about to arrive at Marston Station—my destination—where some one, Aunt Vereker had said, would be sure to meet me.

I knew that the Verekers were rich—at least, rich in comparison with what we had ever been; and, as my means were in future to be of the most modest description, I had traveled in a way that would probably shock them if they chanced to see me alight. But that could not be helped. I knew I was right. Very likely none of them would be at the station; at all events, there was not much time for deliberation; even then the train was slackening speed. I was gathering

up my few belongings, and preparing very tremblingly for the ordeal.

A long, low platform, a narrow strip of garden—cared for with evident pride, for it was blazing with scarlet geraniums and gay flaunting hollyhocks—and a pretty archway of hops spanning a white-painted gate, beyond which was a wide expanse of gravel; standing on it, a few paces off, a pony-carriage, in which a lady was seated. All passed quickly before me, as I nodded a very choking farewell to my traveling companion. Then, with her assistance, I deposited my things upon the ground.

I had jumped out very quickly, not pausing to glance either to the right or to the left, when suddenly a voice behind me said something which in my nervousness I could not quite catch; but, looking up, I found myself facing a gentleman who, concluding who I was, introduced himself as my cousin, John Vereker. He was dressed in a rough gray shooting-suit, with a wide-awake hat, which he raised slightly when he first addressed me.

"Lina is here, too," he said. "We drove over together; and the cart has been sent for your boxes."

"Thank you," I answered; "but I have only one small box and what you see."

"All right," said my Cousin John, though how he came to be my cousin was a mystery which was still to be explained; for I had never heard that Aunt Vereker had a son. I had always imagined that her family consisted of daughters only.

He possessed himself quietly of my small property, and, leading the way, conducted me through the gateway to the pony-carriage wherein Lina sat, gazing towards us with evident curiosity as we approached. She welcomed me kindly, and then proceeded to ask if I would mind sitting behind in the seat usually occupied by the groom, as she wished to drive home.

"And John won't let me," she said, with a pretty, plaintive gesture, "unless he sits beside me. He is such a tiresome old plague; aren't you, John?"

"Nonsense, Lina," replied John, "I mean to sit here," pointing to the back

seat. "I can guide the reins just as well, if you get frightened."

So I got in obediently, and seated myself by Lina's side. She kept up a running fire of small talk all the way home, varied only by one or two nervous exclamations when the ponies seemed disposed to get beyond her control. When had I started? Was I very tired? Didn't I think the heat terrific? And wasn't I afraid to take such a long journey alone?

"O John," suddenly stopping her conversation with me, during which my replies had not been of the least consequence to her, "here is Mr. Haughton coming! Hadn't we better speak to him? He is sure to have made a call on us, and he will have been so dreadfully disappointed. Do stop, John."

Walking very leisurely up the road, accompanied by several dogs, was a gentleman who I of course concluded was Mr. Haughton. He was tall and very fair, with an almost white moustache and an extremely handsome sunburnt face. The features were faultless, excepting only the chin, which, sloping upwards, gave a look of indecision and weakness, which in my opinion detracted not a little from his good looks. However, he was very gentlemanlike, and greeted Lina most cordially, as well as my Cousin John.

Neither of them thought of introducing me, so I sat quietly by, half amused, half amazed at Lina's incessant chattering, and her evident desire to impress Mr. Haughton favorably. It struck me, however, that the latter appeared hardly grateful enough to her. His manner was a mixture of indifference and politeness; and after the first few sentences had been spoken, he made a decided movement to depart, which Lina apparently did not notice. She rattled on most vigorously, until reminded by her brother that we ought to hasten homewards on my account. So with a few last words, which were rather lengthy ones, we started off once more on through a most picturesque little village, then down a broad road bordered on either side by magnificent elm trees, until we came to an iron gateway with a cosey lodge, one mass of blooming jessamine, roses, and honeysuckle, with bright lattice-paned windows and brilliant flower-beds facing them.

"How pretty!" burst from my lips. "How lovely! Oh, it is like a picture!" I

exclaimed involuntarily, as we drove up the short approach and came within view of the house.

It stood on a slight eminence, surrounded by grand old trees. Not far off was a miniature lake, in the still waters of which we could see the reflection of the sky and the leafy branches. The house itself was a long, low, irregular building, with charming French windows opening out upon a lawn of exquisite smoothness and beauty. I was half ashamed of my outspoken admiration, particularly as Lina took no notice. However, in another few seconds we drew up before the doorway. The reins were thrown by Lina to a groom, who promptly appeared; Cousin John helped me to get out, and under his escort I was presently ushered into Aunt Vereker's presence.

I had expected to see someone very cold and formal—I had fancied she was so from her letters; but instead, I found a youthful-looking person, dressed in most elaborate black—it could scarcely be called mourning—with a tiny little tulle trifle perched most coquettishly on the side of her head, which thick plaits of chestnut hair also adorned. Far from being cold and formal, she was cordial and kindly to a degree; she repeated all Lina's inquiries, and was equally accommodating as to my answers. But, although outwardly there was nothing left for me to desire, so far as words went, something, I could not explain what, chilled me towards Aunt Vereker.

My relatives were, in fact, a puzzle to me; but by degrees all was explained. I could not make out how by any means Mr. John Vereker could be Aunt Vereker's son, nor, indeed, how so young a person as at first glance she looked could even be Lina's mother, or the mother of the three other girls, Beatrice, Mary and Emily, who came trooping in shortly to be introduced to me.

Aunt Vereker had been a widow for about five years, and since then had lived at the Grange, which belonged to Mr. John Vereker, who was only her step-son, having been a well-grown boy of fifteen when his father fell in love with and married her. Perhaps it was out of love for her, perhaps it was from some innate conviction of her incapability and shallowness, perhaps from his entire confidence in his son; no one knew; but the late Mr. Vereker had left his widow to the care of his son, and trusted to him to supplement, as far as he consid-

ered needful, a very moderate settlement, which was all he had made upon his wife.

John Vereker was a rich man, and, what was still more to the point in my aunt's opinion, a very generous one. She considered she had been very badly treated by her husband, and there were times when she rather murmured because her step-son did not secure to her the allowance he gave. However, those sentiments were never uttered in his presence; it was only behind his back that John Vereker was at times accused of being "mean," "stingy," and "miserly." The girls were each to have three thousand pounds—"a beggarly pittance," Aunt Vereker said, but if John did his duty they would have a great deal more.

By degrees I understood it all, and also came to see that Aunt Vereker's youthful appearance was not always so surprising. Sometimes she looked quite old and haggard; at others, the amiable, smiling expression she usually wore would give place to a captious, discontented one.

Lina was her favorite; and Lina's prospects of a matrimonial settlement were just then beginning to occupy her mind. Mr. Haughton was the individual upon whom their hopes were resting; and as I came to know my aunt better, I trusted most sincerely, for the sake of the general peace, that he might not disappoint them.

He was a frequent visitor at the Grange; in fact, hardly a day passed without our seeing something of him; but as his place was within an easy distance, and he had nothing at home to enliven him, I sometimes wondered whether it was for his own or Lina's sake that we were so often favored with his company. I had been at the Grange a little over a month, and had become day by day more convinced of one thing, namely: that neither Aunt Vereker nor Lina regarded me with friendly eyes. Perhaps I was too near Lina's age—I was just nineteen; perhaps they felt I was a restraint and burden. I could not tell what it was. Of Mr. John Vereker I saw very little; and my three younger cousins, being still in the schoolroom, were seldom available as companions; so I found myself solitary in the midst of them all, an intruder and an interloper—just what I had feared when I was hurrying towards Marston, on the first day of my arrival.

I had one pleasure, however, which none of them grudged me, and of which I could

avail myself as often as I desired. Soon after I came to Marston the organist of the village chapel was suddenly taken ill; no one was able or willing to undertake the duties he could not for a time perform, and for the first Sunday the service was conducted without music of any kind.

"Aunt Vereker," I said, that same evening, "do you think Mr. Harleigh would let me play for him?"

"You!" repeated Aunt Vereker. "Play in church! Oh, no; it would never do!"

"I used to do so at home sometimes," I answered, "when I didn't sing in the choir."

"I don't like the idea of your performing here in public," replied Aunt Vereker, severely. "I should never dream of allowing Lina to do such a thing."

"But Lina couldn't," put in Beatrice, with naive sincerity.

"Couldn't she?" laughed Lina, who at that moment appeared, with Mr. Haughton behind her, at the drawing-room window. "Pray what can I not do?"

"Play the organ in church. Blanche has been asking mamma if she may."

"Are you musical, Miss Beresford?" asked Mr. Haughton, addressing me.

"I am very fond of music, if that means being musical," I answered, with a guilty consciousness that Aunt Vereker was eyeing me severely.

"Will you play something now?" continued Mr. Haughton. "Do ask your cousin," appealing to Lina, who seconded his request so warmly that I was obliged to accede.

Hardly had I played a few chords when Aunt Vereker, interrupting me, begged that we would all recollect what day it was—Sunday—and if I must play, she must beg me to play only chants. However, Lina and Mr. Haughton drew near the piano, at which I had seated myself, and soon a chorus of voices, shrillest among them Aunt Vereker's own, sounded through the pretty dining-room.

But music at the Grange was not like the music I reveled in when, armed with Aunt Vereker's rather unwillingly accorded consent, I undertook the organist's post, and practiced for it in the long summer afternoons. It was a lovely little chapel, built partly by Uncle Vereker, and fully finished at Mr. John Vereker's expense. Many an hour I spent in it, many a sad thought and

fancy I embodied in the grand tones which rolled forth under my fingers. When I was saddest, when things felt strangest and most desolate. I used to take the key of the chapel, and, tying on my hat, run down the shrubby walk, and, crossing the broad elm-bordered road, enter the still little edifice, and in pleasures of harmony forget as far as I could the realities of life.

One rather drizzling day I had set forth to have some practice, and had just reached the gateway leading to the chapel, when I saw Mr. Haughton coming towards me. It was impossible to pretend that I had not observed him; I must make some civil remark; so I waited quietly until he came up, fancying that he would go on to the Grange, where I knew he was already expected.

As yet he had not done his duty regarding Lina; she was still hoping daily for a declaration, the very tardiness of which might have sufficed to convince her that it would never come. I pitied Lina from my heart. What could be more wearing or more degrading than a perpetual effort to bring an unwilling suitor to the point, or more distracting than Aunt Vereker's transparent little schemes to throw them together and to give him every possible facility for asking the question that was to make poor Lina happy?

"Did he say nothing to-day, Lina," Aunt Vereker would ask—"nothing tangible?"

"No, nothing. What do you mean?" Lina would answer, angry, indignant, and disappointed.

Mr. Haughton's silence, though very exasperating, did not suffice to damp my aunt's welcome to him. He was at liberty to come to the Grange at all times, and, when there, was treated with all the honor due to a future most unexceptionable son-in-law. I have described him as a handsome man. In features he certainly was, and his general appearance was most gentlemanlike; but, when he stood side by side with my Cousin John Vereker, the contrast between the two ought, I thought, to have been sufficient to cure Lina of her preference. For there was nothing manly about Eustace Haughton, no intellect in the pale blue eyes, no strength in the narrow white hands, with their long, nerveless-looking fingers; whilst Mr. Vereker, with his almost plain face, gray-streaked hair, and shabby shooting-coat, had an air of quiet decision, an indescribable something which at once

proclaimed him to be, what I felt from the first he was, a brave, honest, honorable gentleman. I could have fancied it possible to face any great danger quietly with John Vereker by my side.

Before I had been long at the Grange, I knew that I had seen the one person in the world with whom life for me would be almost cloudless; but what folly it was to think of such a thing! How I tried to reason myself out of it one moment; the next, how closely I clasped the sweet secret—the secret that would be buried with me! For I loved John Vereker—I, Blanche Beresford, aged nineteen, possessed of the magnificent fortune of about fifty pounds a year, with nothing to recommend me except perhaps my voice. And I could sing; even Aunt Vereker said one night that she could not listen quite unmoved when Blanche sang, for she had tears in her voice.

I wondered what he thought. But he seldom spoke to me. Sometimes, when he seemed inclined to do so, I grew so nervous that my answers simply repelled him. I knew it; and writhed to think how utterly foolish and unnatural I must appear. I had the presumption to love him. Well, no one knew it, and time might cure me, perhaps. Besides, I should not long remain at the Grange; Aunt Vereker did not wish it. I could perceive that more from her manner than anything she ever said; instinctively I was aware that the welcome of which I had been doubtful from the first had ceased to exist, and that toleration only was accorded to me by my cousins as well as herself. No suspicion of what had caused the growing coolness had ever flashed across me, never distantly did I dream of the possibility of my having interfered with Lina's prospects, until this drizzling afternoon, when, hurrying to the chapel, I chanced to encounter Mr. Haughton.

"Miss Beresford," he said, when the first greetings had been exchanged, "won't you give me a great pleasure? Won't you let me hear you sing something? I know that you are going to practice. Won't you let me listen?"

"If you like," I answered, without any hesitation. "Old Tufton comes to blow the organ for me, so I must go to the cottage first."

"Couldn't I do instead?" asked Mr. Haughton. "Suppose you engage me, and dismiss old Tufton?"

"You would not be satisfied with old Tufton's wages," I replied. "He is very modest in his demands."

"Try me," answered my companion. "I am sure you know," he added more seriously, "what a pleasure it would be to me—you ought to know."

"I don't see that at all," said I, somewhat alarmed at the turn the conversation was taking. "I don't think Tufton is in; the door is not generally shut."

Tufton proved to be out; so there was nothing for it but to agree to accept Mr. Haughton's good offices, or to give up my practice. I hesitated for a few seconds, and then resolved upon the latter course.

"I sha'n't practice to-day," I said, as we retraced our steps towards the chapel.

"Do," urged Mr. Haughton; "do, Miss Beresford. I should like to hear you play!"

"You hear me every Sunday," I said, smiling.

"Yes, I know that; but then you are playing for everybody's benefit. I should like you to play for my mine only. Oh, Miss Beresford," he continued, with some vehemence, "if you only knew"—

"I don't want to know," I interrupted desperately—"I don't want to know anything."

Whatever he might have intended to say was checked, not so much by my entreaties as by the sudden and timely appearance of my two cousins, John Vereker and Lina, who just then turned down the pathway leading to where we were.

Nice behavior! Nice conduct! Such a cunning piece of deception had never before come under her eyes; but she knew me now—that was one comfort—knew me thoroughly. So Aunt Vereker informed me, when, after a protracted interview with Lina, she came into my room to confront me with my crime.

"I don't know what you mean, aunt," I said. "I really do not understand what I have done."

"Done!" echoed Aunt Vereker. "Done! Why, your own conscience might tell you! You have deprived poor Lina of all she cares for in the world; you have lured Eustace Haughton away from her, just when he was on the verge of a proposal, by your quiet, sneaking ways."

"I—lured—Mr. Haughton! Oh, aunt! how can you say such a thing? I met him to-day by the purest accident."

"I am sure you did—an accident of daily occurrence," replied Aunt Vereker. "Very accidental, no doubt! I suppose that is equally accidental;" and she threw down a letter addressed to me in an unknown hand.

I gazed at it for a moment, instinctively guessing that it came from Mr. Haughton, and dreading to open it from very ignorance of its contents. Aunt Vereker paused in her reproaches, evidently hoping that I would peruse my letter; but I quietly consigned it to my pocket, saying:—

"I should say it was quite accidental; for I do not recognize the handwriting."

"Little serpent!" cried my aunt, as she turned to leave the room. "I wish you had never darkened my doors!"

She closed the door behind her with a loud bang, leaving me to my own far from pleasant reflections. What an unfortunate thing it had been for me to meet Mr. Haughton at all—how still more unlucky that just at that juncture John and Lina should have met us! I had hardly dared to glance at Lina's flushed, angry face; but I had stolen a swift glance at my Cousin John, whose expression baffled me.

How he must despise me if he thought I had laid myself out to entrap such a man as Mr. Haughton—I who had never given him a thought, far less dreamt of his preference! Yet there was his letter—for sure enough it came from him—hurried, but earnest in its entreaties to me to accept what he now offered—himself. He feared he had offended me; if he had, I must forgive him; and, if I could not give him my love all at once, he begged me not lightly to reject his, but give him the chance of winning mine.

Never was proposal so unwarranted, never had one been so unwelcome. I sat quiet and speechless after perusing it, until roused by hearing the dressing-bell ring, which warned me that in half an hour I must meet them all at dinner.

Where had the letter been written? It was headed "Brampton Thorpe," which was his own place; so I concluded that he had returned home, written it directly, and despatched it by a special messenger. Little did I dream that he had entrusted it to no other hands than those of my cousin John, who had undertaken to see that it was promptly delivered to me. My ignorance saved me from what really would have been the sharpest sting in the whole transaction. I had no time to answer it before dinner, at

all events. Not that it would have taken me long to do so, for I had no need to hesitate as to my reply. All that I could do was to thrust the unwelcome missive into my pocket and descend to the drawing-room, where I knew that an array of grave faces awaited me.

Lina, tear-stained and indignant, was the first that greeted me; behind her was my aunt, vigorously fanning herself; whilst my Cousin John was apparently buried in the study of the *Times*.

I approached them tremulously enough, and presently summoned up courage to address to Lina a rather unintelligible remark as to having feared that I was late for dinner, my watch being slow.

"Oh, you are in excellent time!" responded my aunt, who took the remark as addressed to herself. "We should have had to excuse you if you had been late."

A slight sob from Lina, and a rustle of the *Times*, followed by the announcement of dinner, saved my having to reply. But what a dinner it was! The only voice was my Cousin John's, who strove, vainly enough, to bring forward topics which might be generally and safely discussed. Once or twice he addressed me in a manner so pointedly kind that I could have broken down there and then, and sobbed my precious secret out at his feet, utterly regardless of Aunt Vereker's or Lina's presence, both of whom sat in silent wrath, glancing towards me with unmistakable contempt and abhorrence.

Well, it would soon be over; for I could not stay long at the Grange. Very soon I should be gone; but whither? That was a question hard, indeed, to answer—a problem beyond my solving. I was very young. I knew nothing of the ways of the world. I had no idea how far my own small means were capable of maintaining me. I was not sufficiently accomplished to be a governess; and, without having one shade of conceit about me, I knew I was too good-looking to pass through life in the obscurity which I began to desire for myself. I had only to look at my own reflection in the glass to know that nature had not been unkind to me as regarded fairness. In fact, the words of my old nurse Martha just then were recalled to me—"Miss Blanche's face will be her fortune." I remember so well the night she said it, years before, when she was brushing out my long thick auburn hair;

and I could see my mother's smile, half sad, half satisfied, and I could recall my own laughing protest against Martha's well-meant foolishness.

How strange it was to think that the grave had closed over both my mother and Martha; that I, who had once been such a cherished child, the centre of a household, should now be an intruder upon rich relatives, an unwelcome guest; that love should be offered to me that I could never care for, and the love I craved be impossible, and denied me!

The vista before me was cold and chill and hopeless. A few lines of refusal having been duly despatched to Mr. Haughton, I sat in my own room reflecting on my future. Many were the projects I revolved ere I slept. These the morning sun dispelled, for they had not been of the wisest. However, with some trepidation I sought out Aunt Vereker, and told her, as simply as I could, how grieved and sorry I was, but how utterly unexpected Mr. Haughton's proposal had been.

"Not unwelcome, if unexpected," responded my aunt. "But I wish to tell you frankly that I think your behavior has been simply abominable. Not that you probably will care for what I may say or think—as Mrs. Haughton you will be in a position to do without my good opinion—but I just wish to express it now to you, and to tell you at the same time how bitterly I regret having allowed you to come here at all."

"That I can quite believe," I answered, with some bitterness. "But you are in error if you think I am likely to become Mrs. Haughton."

"You are not going to impose further upon me, Blanche. Don't imagine that I believe you intend to refuse such an offer."

"I have refused it," I replied laconically.

"You have refused it!" exclaimed my aunt. "Well, you are the best judge of your own actions; but may I ask, if it is true that you have refused Mr. Haughton, what was your object in detaching him from Lina?"

"I never detached him," I answered indignantly; "I never dreamt of his daring to propose to me!"

"Daring to propose! Really, Blanche, I wonder if you have any idea of your own position? By birth you may be entitled to marry a gentleman; but, considering your penniless"—

"I have fifty pounds a year, aunt," I said, "and I mean to live upon that. I am very sorry that I have so innocently distressed Lina; but I shall go away to-day—to-morrow—as soon as you like; and Mr. Haughton will do me the justice to tell you that it was no fault of mine."

"As if I would discuss it with him," uttered Aunt Vereker; "and as if I could, in decency, allow you to go away! No, no; you must remain where you are until I can see you properly bestowed elsewhere; but, recollect, here you have brought nothing but unhappiness, and in this house your presence can never be welcome. I am only giving you an idea of what every one, from your Cousin John downwards, thinks and feels in consequence of your conduct."

This was a final blow for me. A wild sense of injustice, the cruelty of all, surged through me. Involuntarily I started up, and then sat down, faint and trembling, speechless with impotent wrath, shame, and sorrow.

"Please do not attempt any heroics. Blanche; I am not a person to be impressed by any exhibition of the kind"; and Aunt Vereker got up, and, with a sneering glance towards me, left the room.

So pass on, first days, then weeks, then months, at the Grange, drearily and mournfully; for I had no choice but to remain. No other door was open to receive me, and until I was of age, at least, Aunt Vereker said I should not disgrace the family by doing what I had resolved upon—earning my bread.

Mr. Haughton came no more to see us, and my Cousin John departed to spend first, a couple of months at his shooting quarters in Scotland, and afterwards, I gathered from what I heard, he went about paying visits. At all events, the Grange was not to see him until Christmas. How I longed for Christmas to come, and how I listened for any chance scrap of information touching the movements of my cousin!

One very dull, rainy morning in December there came a letter from him to Aunt Vereker, headed from Grimsby Castle. Lord Vandeleur had pressed him to remain for another week, so he would not appear at the Grange until the twenty-fourth—Christmas Eve.

"There must be some special attraction at Grimsby," suggested Lina. "Isn't Miss Vandeleur a great beauty?"

"I believe she is," returned Aunt Vereker; "but John isn't a marrying man, happily for us. He has often said he would never marry."

"That's the very reason he will," replied Lina, petulantly. "A nice thing for us to have to bundle out of this house and go off to some poky hole!"

"Don't distress yourself, Lina," said my aunt. "John isn't attractive enough to please the Honorable Miss Vandeleur. She expects to marry nothing under a duke."

"I hope she won't be disappointed," sighed Lina; "but I agree with you, mamma," more brightly; "John isn't a beauty."

Where were their eyes; or was it the glamour of love in my own that made me think the non-attractive John the embodiment of all that was good and perfect? Their disparaging remarks were a comfort to me in one way; for, in my worship of him, I thought everyone else who came under his influence must be similarly affected.

It was late when he arrived, looking browner and more stalwart than ever, and just as quiet, grave, and nice as he had been since I first saw him. I was very nervous when he advanced to shake hands with me. Perhaps my state of mind accounted for the sudden pallor which must have overspread my face, for my Cousin John said kindly:—

"Blanche is not well, surely?"

"Oh, yes, I am—quite well!" I said, quickly.

"What is the matter?" asked Aunt Vereker, sharply, turning towards me just in time to see a burning blush covering my face. "I see no signs of illness."

"Don't you?" I heard Cousin John say; and then the lights began to flicker strangely, and vague noises like the rushing of many waters sounded in my ears. I made a wild stumble forwards, and then, failing to reach a friendly chair, was conscious of sinking downwards, downwards into darkness, and presently revived to find that I was being borne up-stairs in a pair of strong arms; and I recognized, bending over me as he laid me down, the face of my Cousin John.

"She is better now," he said softly. "It was a fainting fit, I suppose. Has it happened before?"

"Never," answered a voice which I knew was Aunt Vereker's; and then Cousin John went quickly out of the room, leaving me,

with a bitter sense of humiliation and shame, to recover.

What would they all think of me? I could fancy Aunt Vereker's setting my illness down to heroics, and a desire to attract; I could imagine Cousin John himself being once more and forever "disgusted," and Lina's innumerable suppositions as to what had caused the seizure. I lay there all the evening alone. Only once Beatrice came up, to see if I would have some tea, as I had missed dinner altogether.

No, I would have nothing—nothing at all; I was glad to be a martyr, as some sort of self-punishment for my weakness. And I had a dim hope my refusal might be made known to Cousin John.

It was a wretched feeling, I own; I should really have enjoyed a cup of tea immensely; still more should I have liked to be downstairs, instead of spending my Christmas Eve in such a miserable fashion. At last kind nature's sweet restorer closed my tired eyelids and banished my dreary thoughts; and, when I woke, Christmas Day had fairly dawned.

Such a lovely day it was! the ground and trees covered with snow; icicles were hanging in crystal glittering loveliness; the great elm-tree branches were bowed with drifts of half-melted snow, which crumbled into powder when a bird lighted on a bough, or dropped gradually in soft fragments to the ground. All was still, white, and lovely when I looked out of my bed-room window, lit up as the landscape was by a reflection from the sun on the otherwise colorless scene.

"A merry Christmas!" How the words would be flying from mouth to mouth! What a joyous sound they had! But how much more meaning lay in the formula—"A happy New Year!" Mine could not be either merry or happy; and I could fancy homes where this glad season had brought feelings more of sadness than of mirth, due to vacant places, vanished faces, dear ones gone to that bourne whence none return. I could fancy separations sadder still, which at this season must be felt with increased pain, broken-up homes, changes as sad as they are strange. Yet this Christmas would be joyous in many places. I hoped it would, as I descended to the dining-room and wished my relatives all the usual wishes of the day.

Service was to be at eleven o'clock; so I

hurried to the chapel to perform my duties there, not waiting to hear whether the rest of the party meant to follow or not. After the preliminary voluntary came that wondrously beautiful hymn:—

"Hark, the herald-angels sing
Glory to the new-born King!"

Then, standing up, I saw in the Grange pew Aunt Vereker, Lina, Beatrice, and my Cousin John, whilst in the Brampton Thorpe one I beheld Mr. Haughton.

The latter's unexpected appearance annoyed me more than I can say. I feared he might wait for me, and offend my aunt more than ever by attempting to renew his request. So, when the service was over, I remained quietly in the organ-gallery until I thought everyone must have gone. At last I ventured out. How pale and silent everything was as I passed through the little church-yard—passed with hurried footsteps, rendered noiseless by the heavy snow—as noiseless as those which overtook me, for I heard no sound until the voice—not of Mr. Haughton, but —of my Cousin John suddenly addressed me.

"What were you doing, Blanche?" he asked. "I thought you were never coming."

Had he waited for me? I almost trembled at the mere idea.

"I was arranging my things for the evening," I answered.

"I don't think you ought to play to-night," he said kindly.

"Why not?" I asked, so brusquely that I was utterly disgusted with myself.

"You are not fit for it," said Cousin John. "I did not know you had been ill when I was away."

"I wasn't ill. I never was better!" I exclaimed; but my face must have contradicted my words, he looked so incredulously at me.

"Why did you faint last night," he asked, "if you are so strong, Blanche?"—stopping suddenly after we had crossed the broad elm-bordered road. "Blanche, may I say something to you?"

"Yes," I murmured; "what is it?"

"You weren't happy, Blanche. I know it; and I have a message for you which may make you happier. I have promised to deliver it to you, and to—ask you to—weigh it," these last words said very slowly.

I was silent; a dull sense of what was coming smote me sorely, but I made no

sign. I knew that John was gazing at me, and I saw that his face was deadly pale. Presently he resumed:—

"Eustace Haughton told me to tell you that he has not accepted your answer as final. He hopes still; and I have promised to tell you so. It is my duty, Blanche. He is rich. I believe he is all that we could desire; and you must weigh matters well. There are advantages"—

"There may be," I interrupted, "many advantages; but I could not care for him, not even if"—

"If what, Blanche?" and my cousin's voice was strangely changed.

"If I had seen no one I cared for more," I answered, with a desperate heedlessness of consequences.

"You love some one else, then?"

"With my whole heart!" I answered.

And then there came a silence, a long, awful silence, during which I noticed with strange acuteness the heavily-laden snow-covered palings and the bent branches of the fir-trees in the shrubbery.

"Can you name him? Blanche, is he worthy? Have compassion, Blanche—have compassion upon me!"

What words would convey the happiness sounded on that snowy Christmas morning?

What heart was so joyous or so thankful as mine, when it dawned upon me that Cousin John had loved me from the first? But from his imagining that the disparity in our ages was too great, and from other groundless causes, he had never dreamed that his preference could be returned.

Six weeks after that we were married; and I am happy to say Mr. Haughton not only got over his disappointment, but consoled himself not long afterwards by marrying, not Lina, but a Spanish-looking beauty who looks down with great condescension on Mr. and Mrs. Vereker.

My aunt did her utmost to conceal her mortification and disapproval of John's choice, knowing as she did that he was not a man to submit to interference in such a matter. So we parted amicably on my wedding-day; and, when we returned, she had vacated the Grange and taken possession of a pretty house in London, given her by John—a change of quarters which was approved of by the family generally.

So my eventful Christmas Day ended in being a merry one. And I cannot do better for my friends than wish them as merry a one, and as happy a New Year, and many of them, as fell and have fallen to my own share.

A CHRISTMAS THANKSGIVING.

BY SUSANNA JONES.

GLAD CHRISTMAS echoes that have poured
so long

Your cheery music through the joyless days,
At last I greet you with an answering song,
And my heart feels the sweetness of your praise.

For God hath granted to these later years
A fairer springtime than my childhood knew—
Peace for my doubts, and safety for my fears,
The lasting treasure of a love most true.

O drooping heart, with many burdens tired!
Reap now the harvest of thy faith and care;
Rest in the haven thou hast long desired,
And take of Christmas joys thy happy share.

Love, I have waited for thy radiant face
To dawn upon this empty life of mine,

To shed new beauty on the desert place,
And break its silence by thy voice divine.

Slowly the years have worn themselves away,
From Yule to Spring, from Summer round to
snow;

And still through level plains my journey lay,
Dead, silent, as a stream's half-frozen flow.

Long was the pilgrimage, and far and wide;
The flowers of Youth lay faded on my breast,
Until, by years of sorrow purified,
My heart was ready for its angel-guest,

Oh, what a paradise this world can be
When God hath blessed it with love's ample store!
Now the glad message of the chimes to me
Is "Peace, goodwill, and joy forevermore!"

FOURTEEN YEARS.

BY STANLEY CURTIS.

TO say that Benjamin Croul was habitually guarded in all his actions and expressions would but faintly express the truth. He was a tall, erect, dark-complexioned man, with blue eyes, firm mouth and closely-shaven face. He always thought twice before he spoke, and his words were never loud nor fast. His expression was one of ever-abiding and self-conscious sanctity, while a certain twinkle about his eye and merciless look around the mouth said plainly he would rather roast a sinner any day than eat a good meal.

Benjamin Croul was a retired merchant, who had a few thousands laid aside with which he occasionally speculated judiciously. He lived in good style, with a maiden sister and a daughter, who had not known a mother's care since her fourth year. At the time of which we write she was eighteen, and her charms of mind and person had drawn unto her many admirers. Among them was one young man who gave her his whole love, and who had the satisfaction of knowing it was returned. His name was George Wentworth, and he was well-off, steady, industrious and ardent.

Our introduction to him shall be in the office of Benjamin Croul, where he went one fine Monday morning on "particular and private business." Mr. Croul favored him with an interview, when he proceeded to make known his errand. He loved Lucy, and Lucy loved him; but Lucy was a conscientious and dutiful girl, and he must see her respected father, and have a talk with him. For that purpose he had now come.

"I am well-off," said George, in a plain, business-like way, for he was talking to a business man. "I have a good business, I believe I am a victim to no bad habits, I think I could make Lucy happy, and—do you give your consent to our marriage?"

Mr. Croul leaned back a trifle further in his chair, assumed a grave expression of countenance, and, after some thought, said:—

"George Wentworth, you are a worthy young man, you are well-off and industrious, but with my consent you cannot marry my daughter Lucy."

George, with an exclamation of surprise and a start, exclaimed:—

"What! Do I understand you to say I cannot marry your daughter?"

"With my consent you cannot marry her," repeated Mr. Croul, in a slow, firm tone.

"And why, sir? What is your objection?"

"My objections, young man, are of such a nature as to forbid discussion here at this time."

"Do you refuse to tell me what they are?"

"I decline, at present, to mention them. It is enough that they are irremovable and insurmountable."

"Then, sir," said George, drawing himself up, "*I demand* to know them. If they are so important, it is my *right* to know them."

"Mr. Wentworth," replied Mr. Croul, with a slightly perceptible increase of stateliness, "you are going altogether too far when you presume to make such *demands* on me. You have my decision; that is enough. The reasons I might give would in no way alter the case. My daughter you cannot marry."

Mr. Croul spoke these last words slowly and with distinct and deliberate emphasis.

George gazed at the old man, so impenetrable in his armor of reserve and caution.

"Sir," said he, "you blight your daughter's happiness and mine. You use your authority as a despot uses his power. You refuse what is essential to our happiness, and yet you are silent as to the motives that influence you. It would be some satisfaction to know the grounds of your refusal, to know if there be good and sufficient cause, and if so what it is, for my not marrying your daughter. But you have chosen to have it so. It is your will to act the despot. Tyrants, however," said he, his voice rising, "sometimes live to see their subjects rebel and escape from their cruel clutches."

Mr. Croul listened in silence. After George had ceased speaking, and he had taken sufficient time to reflect, he said:—

"Mr. Wentworth, you are excited"—

"Heaven knows I am!"

"You are excited, and perhaps not without cause. But you little know of what you speak. The reasons for the answer I have given you are, as I said before, insurmountable. It would do you no good to know them. But go, now. Leave me. I will reflect on this matter, and possibly may conclude to say to you more than I have. But beware, I say—mark my words—beware of pressing me too hard to reveal what you ask!"

"Do you threaten?"—began George.

"I make no threats. But go, I repeat, and you may hear from me again before long."

"I leave you," said George, "but I do not give up my object. No! My love is too strong for that. It will overcome all obstacles."

The old man waved his hand impatiently, and George departed.

He wended his way through the crowded street, not heeding where he went. He was truly at a loss to know why Benjamin Croul had refused him the hand of his daughter. And as he reflected on the matter it became no more apparent to him.

"He has some hidden motive," the young man thought; "can the love of money be at the bottom of it? He is rich, and penurious, but I think not miserly. Heavens!" and he clenched his fists, "what torture, to see him so cool and immovable, refusing to give me the slightest satisfaction! Poor Lucy—what will she say? Pity she is so conscientious! If 'twere not for that, we would defy the old reprobate, and fly to some distant spot, there to— But what nonsense is this! Here I am, well-off, of good habits, fairly educated, and industrious. I will know the old man's reason, or I'll marry her in spite of all his power and dignity."

With these and similar thoughts revolving through his mind he walked on until he came to the entrance of a theatre. Obeying a sudden impulse he purchased a ticket and went in to the play. As may be readily imagined, he paid but little heed to the performance, and when it was over, he went to his lodgings, passed a restless night, and in the morning sat down moodily to breakfast. While he was yet at the table a note was brought to him. He opened it with a slow, indifferent air, which changed to lively interest as he read the following:—

"Oct. 20th.

"MY DEAR SIR,—If you can make it convenient to call at my office at ten o'clock this morning, perhaps you may succeed in gaining more satisfaction than in your late interview with me. Yours,

"BENJ. CROUL."

"More satisfaction," thought George; "humph, I wonder what he means by that. His objections were insurmountable he said, and irremovable. It can't be that he is going to consent. No, it must be that he is going to reveal the wonderful secret that stands between Lucy and me. I would like to know what it is, and perhaps the 'satisfaction' I am to receive is simply a revelation of the great obstacle. Speculating won't solve the question, however, and so I'll be on hand promptly."

As yet it was only eight o'clock. He went to his room and penned a long epistle to Lucy, wherein he gave an account of his interview with her father, expressing his failure to comprehend his refusal either to give consent to their marriage or to state any reasons for his action. He begged Lucy to plead with him herself, and try, by her entreaties, to induce him to change his mind. His letter was pervaded with a spirit of love, determination and pluck, and was altogether such an epistle as might be expected from a young man of George's temperament and surroundings.

At ten o'clock promptly he was at the door of Mr. Croul's office. He was immediately shown into the private room of that gentleman.

"Well, Mr. Croul," said George, "I received your note, and am here on time, I believe."

Mr. Croul took out his watch, looked at it, and bowed gravely.

"Mr. Wentworth," he said, "you may wonder at the question I am about to ask you. But I ask it in all seriousness, and wish you to consider well your answer. Then you alone will be responsible for the consequences. I ask you do you wish me to make known to you my objections to your marrying my daughter Lucy?"

"I most certainly do," replied George, firmly, the liveliest emotions of curiosity and anticipation inwardly agitating him.

"Very well, then," said Mr. Croul. "This marriage which you desire is fraught with consequences most dreadful, and

must bring with it calamities and sorrows enough to appall the bravest heart. When my revelation shall be completed you will shrink with horror from the act you are so bent on. But in order not to waste time, step with me into my carriage. We will have to make an hour's journey, and during that time I will unfold the tale."

With much wonder and some incredulity George accompanied Mr. Croul to the street, where they entered the latter gentleman's private carriage and drove off briskly.

They soon left the business streets and entered more quiet thoroughfares, finally taking a road that led beyond the limits of the city. Mr. Croul then spoke and said:—

"My young friend, what I have to say concerns my life history. It is with great effort that I bring myself to commence on the record. Twenty years ago I married a young and beautiful girl whom I fondly loved. She returned my love with all the fervor a young heart could wish. We lived happily for two years, and then God sent a beautiful baby-girl to shed its light around us. Oh, how dear she was to us! We christened our Lucy"—

"Lucy," involuntarily exclaimed George.

"Yes, the same whom you now seek to wed. No one knows the comfort we took with her. Her happy face and childish ways cast a halo of joy around our whole being. We were happier, if possible, than ever. I was prosperous in business, our health was good, and nothing seemed wanting to complete our happiness. Ours was perfect contentment.

"But a day of sorrow awaited us. One day, shortly after Lucy's third birthday. I was going home at noon, and when within a short distance of the house, saw my little daughter run out of the front door, into the yard, uttering wild cries of terror. As she saw me she hastened to me and sprung into my arms. I asked her what the matter was. Amidst her sobs and tears she said her mother had been whipping her, and, when she cried, laughed at her. You may imagine my great astonishment at this when I inform you that we had never had occasion to administer the slightest punishment to Lucy. I imagined she must have suddenly undergone a transformation, to commit an act deserving of chastisement. However, I endeavored to comfort her and quiet her convulsive sobbing, and hastened on into the house.

"Arriving there, I found my wife seated at her piano, singing a song and playing a brilliant accompaniment. On observing me enter, with Lucy in my arms, she suddenly ceased playing, and, with such an expression of cunning mirth on her countenance as I had never seen before, she uttered a silly titter and ran up to me and kissed me. Her conduct seemed strange in the extreme, for she took no notice of Lucy's tears.

"What is it? What does it all mean? What has Lucy been doing?" I had inquired, hastily.

"Doing? Nothing that I know of," she replied; "why do you ask?"

"But what is the cause of her crying? Why did you whip her?" I asked.

"Crying? whip her? I did not whip her. And is she crying? Why, how funny!"

"Funny!" I exclaimed, in some impatience. "I don't think it is funny at all. I met her running out of the door, crying, and she said you had been whipping her."

"Did she, though?" exclaimed Maria (my wife's name), with a flash in her eye I had never seen before. "I'll take that out of her! I'll teach her to tell stories. The little witch!"

"For God's sake, Maria," I exclaimed, "tell me what is the matter!"

"Up to this moment she had been laughing, but now she suddenly put both hands up to her head, and bursting into a hysterical sob, hastened to her bedroom. She lay down on the bed, cried violently for a few moments, and, allowing no one to approach her, sunk into a troubled slumber, from which she awoke with a high fever. I summoned the doctor, who gave a few simple remedies, but did not seem to think any illness of consequence would result. And sure enough, she was up and apparently as well as ever in a few days.

"As you may imagine, I was very much concerned about this affair. I said nothing about it to my wife, as the slightest allusion to the subject seemed to give her pain.

"But I must hasten my narrative," said Mr. Croul, looking out of the carriage window, "for in five minutes we shall be at our destination."

George looked out, and saw, some distance ahead, within a yard enclosed by a high wall, a large, gloomy-looking brick building. This was the only structure, save a small frame dwelling, within a mile. Mr. Croul resumed:—

"Things went on as usual for about a month, when the same circumstances—almost exactly the same in detail—occurred again. And again in a week, I came home, and found my wife leaning from a chamber window with her pet dog suspended by a strong cord around its neck. She was swinging the animal from side to side, and laughing in long, loud peals. Again, I found her on the roof of our house, with an armful of plates, throwing them on the stone walk below, screaming with mirth. Similar occurrences took place after that with increasing frequency. My wife, as you must have already inferred, was becoming crazy. In less than a year from the first occurrence I have related, she was a confirmed, incurable lunatic."

Mr. Croul paused, as if he were struggling for the mastery with his emotions. George was dumb with astonishment and expectancy.

They now approached the gate of the wall which enclosed the stone building.

"We were compelled to put her in an asylum, where she has been ever since, a raving maniac. I brought you here to show you the fearful wreck of what she once was."

Mr. Croul appeared greatly agitated, and seemed to control himself with difficulty. Suddenly he was his old austere, firm, cautious self, with no emotion manifest in his countenance, and no weakness in his tone.

"I have brought you here to show you my wife," he said, "which ought to be enough to prevent any man from desiring to wed her daughter. But think not that my story is ended. I have more to tell you, which I will tell you on my return."

The carriage now stopped. Mr. Croul got out, went into a small building near the gates, and quickly returned. The gates were opened, and they drove up a broad roadway.

On each side was a large lawn, with trees growing at various distances apart. The grass was trimmed closely, and everything arranged with the most scrupulous neatness.

A young man about twenty years of age stepped up to the visitors, grasped George's hand, and inquired with an air of anxiety:—

"Is the queen any better? And did she send any word to me?"

"Jackson!" called an attendant, "this way!"

The lunatic obeyed the command with a crestfallen air.

The two visitors entered the asylum by a flight of broad steps, and were ushered into the private office of Doctor Madden.

The doctor was a small, compactly built man, with a partially bald head and a sharp gray eye. His movements were quick, his glance penetrating, and he had the air of one who could take in a whole situation at a glance, and then prove himself equal to any emergency. He glanced at George, and then gave Mr. Croul an inquiring look, as if to ask if he had brought him another patient. Mr. Croul said:—

"Doctor Madden, this is my young friend, Mr. George Wentworth, whom I have brought to show around the institution a little."

"Oh, I am very happy to meet Mr. Wentworth, and shall take pleasure in exhibiting to him the various phases of the human mind in an abnormal condition. Have you ever visited an insane asylum, sir?"

"Never," said George, "and I would not be here now were it not for a particular object."

"Some friends you wish to see, perhaps."

Here Mr. Croul took the doctor aside, and conversed with him for a few moments in a low tone.

"A very sad case," said Doctor Madden, turning to George, "and one of our confirmed incurables. Very sorrowful circumstances. Terrible sight to see her. My dear, sir, you must summon all your self-command and resolution."

"Do not fear, sir," replied George; "I am no coward, and my nerves are strong."

The doctor led the way through a long hall, up a flight of stairs, to another hall branching off at right angles, and finally approached a door locked and barred. Several mild lunatics had followed them, and kept up a continual chatter with their talk, gibberish and laughter, but now, at a wave of the doctor's hand, they turned about and fled, some skipping merrily, some moping sullenly, some madly running, and others hopping arm in arm, each giving vent to his feelings in some peculiar manner.

"These," said the doctor, "are cases which are not violent, and for which we have hopes of recovery. This is the hour for them to assemble together for recreation."

He unlocked the securely fastened door they had by this time reached, and motioned

his visitors to precede him. They entered a large, square room, on one side of which was a row of cells, which could only be entered by opening large doors composed of bars of iron.

In these cells were the incurables. From between the bars peered faces distorted and rendered horrible by passion, sorrow and hallucination. Some were screaming, others muttering savage threats, and others only glared fiercely from their confinement.

They proceeded to one cell in a further corner of the room, which was thickly padded on all sides. Crouched down in one corner was a woman with her clothes in shreds, her hair tangled, and her face disfigured by scratches. As the two approached closely she sprang up, looked defiantly at them for a moment, and laughed a harsh, grating laugh.

"You are shocked, ain't you?" she screamed, "at my torn clothes and tattered garments. But see here! and here! and here!"

And with each exclamation she leaped against the walls of her room with violence. Finally she suddenly became silent, and sat looking at her visitors with her large, rolling eyes. She was apparently about forty-five years of age, and bore traces of former beauty.

Mr. Croul and George turned away from the spectacle with loathing, the doctor alone maintaining his ground and looking steadily at the maniac.

"And this"——said George.

"Is my once happy and beautiful wife," said Mr. Croul.

"The mother of Lucy?" George groaned.

"The mother of Lucy, whom you would wed, and call your own through life!"

"Ay, indeed I would," spoke up George; "I would dismiss all thoughts of this raving maniac. What has she in common with the beautiful girl whom I love? If this was the revelation that was to drive love from my heart and truth from my lips, our journey has been made in vain"——

"Stop!" interrupted Mr. Croul. "My tale is not done yet. The worse is to come. While we are returning I will finish!"

His voice was harsh, and unwontedly loud. His gray eyes flashed defiance, and his expression was that of one who would not be baffled, rather than that of a man bereft of comfort and the light of his home.

George looked and listened in surprise.

The old man's manner arrested his attention, his half-triumphant tone, as it seemed, appearing strangely out of place. All were silent for a moment.

"Well, gentleman," said the doctor, "are you satisfied? Shall we go now?"

"Yes, yes," exclaimed George, "let us go. Let me hear this dread tale, and know the worst as soon as possible."

"Yes," said Mr. Croul, in a weak and subdued tone, now his old cautious self again, "let us go. I would fane finish my sad tale, and dismiss these harrowing thoughts from my mind."

The doctor led the way out, and they passed through the halls back to the office.

"Would you like to walk about the grounds, sir?" said the doctor, to George.

"Mr. Croul and I have a little private business to transact, and perhaps you can amuse yourself among our harmless patients, who are at present taking air exercise."

George assented, and was soon wending his way around the smooth grass plot. He kept aloof from the patients as much as possible, as he was in no mood either to be amused by them or amuse them. He walked about musing on his unhappy lot, for the words of Mr. Croul made a deep impression on him, and he could not regard them as meaningless. As he wandered off in one corner of the yard, he looked up at one corner of the building, in a quarter remote from that which he had visited, and observed a row of small windows crossed and re-crossed with heavy bars of iron. He wondered at this, as he had, as he thought, been to the apartment where the most violent ones were confined. He had heard of private mad-houses, where those who had evil designs on their fellow-men could have them confined, whether sane or insane, and rest assured that they would remain there, secure from escape or observation. As his thoughts took this turn he gazed more attentively at the barred windows, and as his eye glanced from one to the other, he saw a pale face peering out into the light of day. With no particular purpose in view, but for lack of better employment, he closely watched its movements. Her face turned, first one way, and then the other, and then, as if satisfied, looked directly at George until his attention was enchained. Then a small white handkerchief was quickly waved and immediately drawn back. George looked closely, and soon the action was re-

peated. He then answered the signal, in order to ascertain whether it was addressed to him. The face smiled, and two hands immediately raised as if enjoining caution.

George was now thoroughly aroused. What did this mean? The turn his thoughts had taken a moment before sent an inquiry through his mind that thoroughly startled him. Was a sane person confined behind those bars, seeking aid for release? He glanced quickly around, and sauntered about carelessly, as if with no particular aim. But he kept close watch of the window and its mysterious occupant, and, at a favorable opportunity, gave a sign of recognition and friendliness. Two hands were held out from the window as if in supplication.

George put his left hand on his heart, and extended his right, as if to say, "I will help you."

Suddenly the face drew quickly back and disappeared from sight. George looked around and saw the keepers approaching. He resumed his walk, nodded carelessly to the keeper as he passed, and stole a glance at the window. He saw nothing but the iron bars. The keeper went around the other side of the building. The face soon appeared again, and George made sign that all was right. She then indicated that she wished him to pay close attention, and pointed her finger to an immense oak tree that stood outside the walls of the yard. George looked at the tree and then at her. She took in her hand what seemed to be a small black stick with a string attached. Drawing it in out of sight she soon held it in view again, and it was a bow.

George now took a paper from his pocket, and while feigning to read watched intently. She brought forth a long, slim stick, and placing one end of it against the string of the bow, took good aim and fired. The arrow shot swiftly through the air and lodged in the branches of the oak tree.

George remained quiet, still watching. The woman now disappeared for a moment, and presently approached the window with what looked like a roll of paper. She slowly unrolled it, and then, taking another arrow, wrapped the paper carefully around it. She then pointed to George and then at the tree.

Now she deliberately placed this arrow against the string, and straining the bow to its utmost tension, let fly again. Whiz! went the arrow through the air, this

time, as before, finding a resting-place among the boughs of the old oak.

Now after a cautious glance all around, she implored George with all the eloquence capable of being expressed in gestures, to go to the oak tree, and possess himself of the arrow. After which nothing more was seen of her.

George was thoroughly aroused for an adventure, and his interest and sympathy were fully enlisted. He approached one of the keepers and said:—

"My good man, I should like very much to gather some of those oak leaves which the autumn has colored so beautifully. As my friend is engaged with Doctor Madden, I think I will have plenty of time to do so before his business is transacted. Will you have the kindness to let me out?"

The keeper led the way to the gates and, giving him a return ticket, allowed him to pass out.

With a sigh of relief at again breathing free air, he hastened to the old oak. Being athletic and strong, he was soon among the branches. He quickly found the first arrow, which looked like a splinter from a pine board. The other he had more difficulty in reaching, as it had lodged far out among the twigs of a slender limb. But by dint of much exertion he finally procured it, and found it very much like the first, except that a roll of manuscript encompassed it. Slipping it into his pocket he descended to the ground. Then drawing it forth and examining it, he saw written on the outside:—

"To the kind stranger who receives this: Do not open it until you are in your own private room. Then read it, and may God guide you to the rescue of her whose sad life it records."

George replaced it in his pocket, and then stepped back a few rods to get a view of the window whence it had proceeded. The figure was again there, and, as he appeared, nodded to him and clasped its hands in thankfulness.

George hastened around to the entrance of the yard, and met Mr. Croul just passing out of the gate.

The two entered the carriage and started city-ward.

"The rest of my story," said Mr. Croul, "will not require a great many words, and I will be as brief as possible."

"My wife became so violent that it became necessary, as you know, to place her

in an asylum. Occasionally she had lucid intervals, but these ceased after a year or two.

"About a year and a half after we had placed her under the care of Doctor Gray (the predecessor of Doctor Madden), I received a visit from her father, who made me a strange disclosure. He said he had discovered an old manuscript which stated that insanity in my wife's family was hereditary. The manuscript was found in an ancient bureau belonging to my wife's grandmother. The strangest portion of it is that *every female member of the family who has married, has lost her reason*. This, according to the manuscript, has been invariably the case for many generations back. The manuscript was left as a warning by my wife's grandfather, but had by some means been mislaid after his death, and only brought to light at the time I mentioned to you. My wife's mother died in a mad-house, but I had always supposed her lunacy was caused by illness.

"Now you know why you cannot marry my daughter Lucy. If she marries, she will surely go mad, and if she has daughters and they marry, they will go mad.

"Neither you nor any sane man would marry, and bring upon coming generations such a dreadful legacy. Sooner would you forget her, than to perpetuate such a curse. Am I not right?"

George covered his face with his hands, and remained silent for some moments. Then looking up with a stern expression, he answered:—

"Yes, you are right. It would be a sin. But I must see Lucy and bid her good-by.

"Yes, you shall see her. Appoint your own time. She is always at home."

Both now leaned back in the carriage, not desiring to carry on the conversation any longer.

They sat on opposite seats, and could observe each other's countenances. Strangely enough, neither seemed quite at ease nor trustful of the other. George would glance at the old man's face as if to catch it in an unguarded expression, while Mr. Croul, observing this, maintained his reserved and impenetrable look. In this way they proceeded until they were again in the crowded streets of the city. They both got out at Mr. Croul's office. It was now past six o'clock in the evening. George went to his room, sat down and tried to think. But

steady thought, in his frame of mind, was distracting.

Suddenly he thought of his adventure at the asylum, and the mysterious manuscript shot from the barred window. Taking it from his pocket he drew a chair to the window and set himself about reading it.

It was a tale of terrible wrong; of tyranny and avarice, of long confinement in a lonely prison, of gross deception and relentless cruelty.

As George read, his face turned pale and his eyes flashed vengeance. He frequently laid down the manuscript, and paced the room in uncontrollable excitement.

He finally laid down the paper, after reading it attentively to the very last word. He thought a moment, and then locked it safely in his private desk, after which he sat down. Taking a fragrant Havana, lighting it, and drawing long whiffs to compose his nerves, he gave himself up to thought. The disclosure had imposed on him the duty of undertaking a most important mission, which would require well-laid plans, and coolness, and promptness of action.

Being unable to bring himself to a state of sufficient composure to retire to rest, he put on his coat and hat, and made his way down town to the office of an intimate friend, Reddy by name. He was a lawyer, neither old nor young, being in the prime of his profession. He had brought several important suits to successful issues, and had in all his business displayed remarkable coolness, and clearness and sagacity. To him George went for advice. He felt confident of finding him, he usually spent his evenings at his office. He was not disappointed.

"Good-evening, Reddy."

"Good gracious, Wentworth! what brings you here at this hour?"

"Important business, Reddy. I want your help."

They were closeted together for over an hour, with what results will subsequently transpire.

The next morning Mr. Croul received a note that caused him to open his eyes. It was an urgent summons to appear that day, at one o'clock, at the private office of Doctor Madden, in his asylum. He was enjoined by no means to fail to be on hand, as business was to be transacted of the utmost moment to him.

"Have I made a cursed fool of myself," he thought, "by letting that Wentworth

into my secret? No, it cannot be. What can he do? He has no hold whatever on me."

He resolved to obey the summons, and at twelve o'clock started with his carriage for the asylum.

Another carriage followed his, which contained two occupants. These were George Wentworth and Mr. Reddy.

Mr. Croul went up the stone steps into Doctor Madden's office. He was presently followed by George and his companion. Doctor Madden was engaged for a few moments, and did not appear until all three of the visitors were seated in his office. When he appeared he bowed politely to all, and said:—

"Well, gentlemen, I received a note, stating that you would be here at this time, and I am at your service."

"I received a note requesting my attendance here on important business, and am here in obedience to the rather unusual and, to me, altogether inexplicable summons," said Mr. Croul.

He spoke in a lordly tone, as if to repel any attack on his dignity. Mr. Reddy arose.

"Gentlemen," said he, "I can enlighten you on the subject of the business which calls us together. I am here as the attorney of an injured lady. This gentleman," turning to George, "is my coadjutor. With your permission, my dear sirs, we will at once proceed to business. First, let me say that the commission I have undertaken is to be executed; and it depends *not* on how much or how little trouble, pains and inconvenience shall attend the carrying out of the same."

While he was speaking, he observed closely the countenances of those present. Mr. Croul had, after a few uneasy motions, planted himself immovably in his chair, and sat there with an almost expressionless face, holding the head of his cane to his chin. Doctor Madden only listened politely.

"To begin with," he continued, turning to Doctor Madden, "I desire the attendance here of James Weyburn, an attendant who has served at this institution for twenty years, who assumed his present position long before you, doctor, became proprietor. Will you summon him?"

"Certainly, sir," said the doctor; and he rang a bell, which was immediately answered by a servant.

"Send Weyburn here," said the doctor.

Weyburn forthwith appeared. He was a man about fifty years of age, broad-shouldered, thick-set, with a small, round head, and a short neck. His face was forbidding in its look, indicating a brutish, merciless disposition, and a crafty, calculating mind. He bowed awkwardly, and stood waiting. Mr. Reddy spoke:—

"Your name is James Weyburn?"

"It is," answered the man.

"You have served in this institution now something over twenty years?"

"Twenty-one years, three months and a week to-morrow."

"Ah, I see you remember dates well. This may be useful. Will you please to take a seat? We may detain you for some time."

Weyburn took a chair and sat down in silence. Reddy glanced sharply at the assembled company. George took his position near the door.

"Doctor Madden," said Reddy, in a clear, distinct manner, "you have confined in the next room but one to the southeast corner of this building, in the third story, a mild but incurable lunatic, who fancies herself to be Mrs. Benjamin Croul."

Mr. Croul bounded to his feet.

"What do you know of this, sir? What is it to you?"

Doctor Madden straightened suddenly up in his chair, and Weyburn gave a sluggish glare of surprise.

"Keep your seat, sir," said Reddy to Mr. Croul. "It is a good deal to me, and more to the unfortunate maniac in question. Am I not right, Doctor Madden, in supposing there is such an inmate of this asylum?"

"Well—ahem—that is to say—well, to tell the truth, yes, you certainly are correct in your statement."

"Let me inform you now, doctor, that nothing which is to transpire here this afternoon can work injury to you. You need not be afraid to let truth be known to its full extent."

The doctor bowed.

"Now, Mr. Weyburn," said Reddy, "pay close attention, and sharpen up your memory."

"Fourteen years ago (it will be fourteen years just a week from to-morrow) you were summoned one dark, stormy night by Doctor Gray, who was then proprietor of this institution. Doctor Gray, you remember,

was a man who scrupled at nothing by which he could make a few dollars, and you were his ally and confidential servant. Be calm now, for if you take matters quietly it will be the better for you.

"As I said, you were called one dark night, told to step into a carriage, and took a long ride with Doctor Gray. You stopped at a small tavern, and walked to a small house a few rods distant, leaving directions with your driver to follow you at a given signal. You knocked at the door of the house at which you called, and were admitted by one whom we will not now name."

"Humph!" ejaculated Mr. Croul.

"I think we've had about enough of this," growled Weyburn, with an impatient motion.

"I disagree with you, sir," said Reddy. "You and Doctor Gray were admitted into the house, and were ushered into a room where sat a beautiful young woman.

"My dear," said the man who had admitted you, 'this is the doctor and his man. Will we proceed at once to business?'

"The lady gave her consent, and leaving her little daughter in charge of a servant, followed you and the doctor, accompanied by her husband, to the door. The carriage came up, and you were driven to a poorhouse about half a mile distant."

"Mebbe I was, and mebbe I wasn't," sullenly interrupted Weyburn.

"Oh, but you were!" said Reddy. "I know all about it. You all got out at the poorhouse, and were conducted to the insane department by the keeper, a kind-hearted old man, who said:—

"How kind of you, Mr. Croul?"—

"Silence, sir!" roared Mr. Croul, springing from his chair, "how dare you? What do you bring my name in for?"

Reddy eyed him steadily, without speaking. Doctor Madden said:—

"Be calm, sir, be calm. What all this is leading to I know not, but let us hear Mr. Reddy through."

"We've heard enough, I say"—

"Silence, Weyburn!" said the doctor, sternly.

Reddy resumed:—

"How kind of you," the old keeper said, 'to take this poor woman off from our hands. She is terribly violent at times, and we have no facilities for keeping her.'

"Yes," said he whom the doctor addressed, 'I have seen that she is but poorly

cared for here. We will try and provide for her better quarters.'

"Let your wife approach her first," said the keeper, 'as a young female only can exercise the slightest control over her.'

"Mrs. Croul—be quiet, gentlemen; it's of no use to raise a row—Mrs. Croul, I say, went into a room, and led forth a woman, who glared around with large, fierce-looking eyes, and whose face and clothes bore evidence of her violent periods. Mrs. Croul induced her to enter the carriage, and took a seat beside her; Mr. Croul and Doctor Gray sat on the other seat, while you rode with the driver.

"The horses were driven to their utmost speed, and about four o'clock in the morning you arrived at this asylum."

Reddy now paused for a moment. He appeared to be considering in what manner it was best to proceed. Weyburn had thrown himself back in his chair sullenly, as if determined to let matters take their course, and utter no word on any provocation. Mr. Croul sat bolt upright, endeavoring to maintain his accustomed rigidity of countenance. In this he signally failed, for his features twitched nervously now and then, and his eyes gleamed with an unwonted brightness. Doctor Madden maintained a non-committal air, like one who was hearing both sides of a case. George Wentworth looked anxiously from one member of the group to another, although he kept a special watch over Weyburn, as if expecting a disturbance from him.

"Gentlemen," said Reddy, "this is a painful matter, and I will come at once to the close. After arriving at the asylum, this maniac from the poorhouse was installed in an apartment which she has occupied to this date.

"Mrs. Croul was shown about the buildings, and while she was in the next room but one to the southeast corner of the building, in the third story, looking through the barred window into the yard below, the door was noiselessly closed on her, and when she turned around she found herself confined beyond hope of escape within four solitary walls, there to pass in misery long, gloomy years of imprisonment."

"It's a lie, a bold, outrageous lie!" shouted Mr. Croul, springing to his feet and raising a chair above his head. He was on the point of springing towards Reddy.

"Stop! The first man who moves drops!"

It was George Wentworth who spoke, and he held a shining six-shooter in his hand. His nerves were steady, and his eyes gleamed dangerously. Mr. Croul cowered back into his former position, and Weyburn, who had started forward, kept quiet. Doctor Madden spoke:—

"For God's sake, gentlemen, let me speak now! This is all a mystery to me. I know nothing of the grounds for these charges. Mr. Reddy, I appeal to you."

"Doctor Madden," said Reddy, whose composure had not been disturbed, "I told you that no harm should come to you, whatever might be the result of this matter, for I believe you are blameless. And I am not certain that Weyburn will suffer, as he acted only in obedience to the instructions of his former master. But let me finish."

"The old maniac from the poorhouse was booked as *Mrs. Croul*, while the actual *Mrs. Croul* was kept in solitary confinement, under an assumed name. Her lunacy consisted in the belief that she was the wife of Benjamin Croul. She was continually addressed by the attendants, and all with whom she came in contact, as Miss White. A story was gotten up that she had been disappointed in love, and had ever since imagined herself to be *Mrs. Croul*. She was never allowed any visitors, and her only outdoor exercise was a walk each day under the watchful guard of an attendant."

"Doctor Madden, I am convinced, has really believed her to be insane, as she was left under him by Doctor Gray, who would not care to reveal to anybody his part in the conspiracy."

"Indeed, I believed her to be insane, and that her true name was White!" ejaculated the doctor. "My predecessor so stated. Mr. Croul has always paid her expenses, and represented that she was the daughter of a poor acquaintance of his."

"You turn against me, too!" said Mr. Croul.

He spoke in a weak, complaining voice, very unlike his usual austere tone. He seemed to be utterly borne down, and to have given up all hope of resistance.

"Now, Weyburn," said Reddy, "the best thing you can do is to make a clean breast of your part in this affair. You shall go free and unharmed if you will promise to leave this asylum and never connect yourself with another institution of the kind. But if you choose to fight it out, we are

ready to meet you; and if it takes such a turn, be assured that it will be pushed to the utmost, and not one jot of mercy shown you. What do you say?"

"Well," said he, "you seem to know all about the thing, though how you came by your knowledge is more than I can tell, and I don't suppose there's any use of denying anything. Yes, you're right. Miss White up-stairs is *Mrs. Croul*, and *Mrs. Croul* down-stairs is an old bedlamite picked up from a poorhouse. There, you have it now; make the most of it."

Doctor Madden rose.

"Gentlemen," said he, "as God is my witness, this is a new and a terrible revelation to me. I always supposed Miss White—*Mrs. Croul*, I should say—to be a lunatic, and her continued and persistent assertion of her relationship with Mr. Croul to be a fancy of her disordered brain."

"I must say that it has often struck me as strange that she displayed such good sense and clear thought on every subject but the one on which she was supposed to be deranged. But as many such cases are on record, I gave myself no particular concern on this score. But now, on due reflection, and considering all the facts that have been brought to light, I am constrained to say that I believe she is as sane as I am."

"I want to ask a question here," said Weyburn, turning to Reddy, "and that is, how did you find out all about this?"

"I refer you to Mr. Wentworth for an explanation of that," replied Reddy.

George now stepped forward and told his story. He related his adventure in the asylum yard, how he had obtained possession of the manuscript of *Mrs. Croul* which contained the strange story of her imprisonment.

"And it was all for money," continued George. "The villain who sits in yonder chair wanted his wife's money within his own control, and could only accomplish this by getting rid of her. That he succeeded but too well we all know. But there is that poor woman in her solitary room above, not dreaming how near her deliverance is at hand. Let somebody go up and break the joyful news to her. He should be compelled to do this, that his downfall may be complete."

"Ha, ha! you are all fools! all fools! You think you will put me down! But you can't! No, no, you never can!"

It was Mr. Croul who spoke. He had sprung from his chair, was gesticulating wildly, and his voice had a hoarse, unnatural ring.

"Good heavens, look at him!" ejaculated Weyburn, springing up. "If he ain't crazy then I never saw a lunatic. Look out!"

Mr. Croul had seized a huge billet of wood and was making for George. George dodged, and Weyburn caught the maniac around the waist. He held him tight while the doctor handcuffed him and secured him to a chair, which was built firmly against the wall.

All looked on in consternation. It was indeed true. The old man, so long the respectable banker, the austere and unapproachable embodiment of dignity, the secret criminal, now with his plans overturned and his villainy laid bare, had indeed gone mad!

The rest of our story is soon told. Mrs. Croul was liberated, and returned to companionship with her lovely daughter, from whom she had been separated so long.

Long confinement had rendered her extremely delicate, and she traveled six months for her health, in company with Lucy, after which a wedding took place—whose, the reader will have no difficulty in divining.

Mr. Croul was a confirmed lunatic. He was placed in Doctor Madden's asylum, and received the best of care. His large property of course went to Mrs. Croul, and enabled her to live in comfort the rest of her days.

Mr. Reddy received a handsome reward in consideration for services, which places him, as the saying is, "above board."

Weyburn left Doctor Madden's asylum, and when last heard from was keeper in a county jail far away from the scene of the incidents we have related.

George and Lucy are a happy couple. Mrs. Croul lives with them, and is serene and happy in her approaching old age, although she will never fully recover from her solitary and cheerless imprisonment of fourteen years.

IN DECEMBER.

BY MORLEY.

UPON the palpitating air
There comes a clang of Christmas bells,
Borne on a wailing wind that swells
Through moaning branches bleak and bare.

The last leaves flutter to the earth;
A misty darkness fills the sky;
The sacred season draweth nigh,
The season of the Saviour's birth,

When joy and frolic mirth are rife,
And holly wreathes the Christmas hearth,—
When gentle Peace enfolds the earth,
And joineth hands and husheth strife,—

When children draw about the tree
That shines with many a flaming tongue,
And shout their joy to old and young,
And clap their hands and leap with glee;

And men and laughing maidens go
And featly foot the mazy round

Beneath the holly-garlands wound
With sprays of mystic mistletoe;

Or draw a circle round the hearth,
Lit only by its flickering flame,
And, with old song and older game,
Awake the echoes of old mirth

That fitly lives again in new.
But we, whose absent numbers more
Than now are left—whose life once wore
Another form—what may we do?

We cannot mix the old with new,
Recall the loved that have gone hence,
Or blot them from the inner sense,
And weave the holly o'er the yew.

But the true meaning of the feast
We would not, if we could, forget.
Hope, Peace, Goodwill, gild for us yet
The coming of the gentle Guest.

WHY OUR WEDDING WAS POSTPONED.

BY H. F. DARLING.

"HOW are you, Althof?"
"Why, Thornhock, how do you do?" and my old friend grasped me by the hand. "You're looking finely, my boy. City life agrees with you, for a wonder."

"Yes," said I; "but, my dear fellow, when did you come in?"

"This morning, on the boat."

"And you were coming to see me?"

"Well, yes, if I could find time. I came in on business, you know, and that must be attended to first. Where can I see you this evening?"

"At No. 48 M—— Street. I'm boarding there. Bang-up place, my boy, but I shall stop there only for a short time longer—going to run an establishment of my own."

"What! you ain't going to?"

"Marry? Well, I am. I've found *the* woman at last."

"Going to be married!"

"Yes. I've bought a house, and it's all furnished, and everything in readiness. Claribel selected the furniture. You shall see her to-night, so don't fail to come. By the way, that's a splendid diamond ring, Althof. If I am not too inquisitive, where did you get it?"

"Oh, I'll tell you all about that to-night. I bought it, but not in the regular way. It's a very valuable ring, but it isn't worth quite what it cost me."

"I've seen a ring very much like that."

"Have you, though? Indeed! Perhaps it was the very same. But never mind; I'll tell you all about it to-night, and in return you will introduce me to the lovely Claribel—for I suppose she is lovely, at least, in your eyes."

"You shall judge for yourself, Althof. She is one

—— "whom to call
Pretty were but to give a feeble notion
Of many charms, in her as natural
As sweetness to the flower, or salt to ocean."

"Indeed! Well, good-day, Thornhock. Don't forget that I'm coming to see you to-night, and so take your lady-love to the theatre, instead of remaining at home to entertain your friend."

"Never fear that. Good-morning"; and

Althof hastened down Broadway, while I strolled leisurely towards home.

Perhaps I may as well mention here that I have the misfortune to be quite wealthy. I was once a very ambitious young man. It was my intention, if possible, to make the name of Thornhock famous, but unfortunately for my good resolutions, my uncle, Timothy Kosh, died, and by his last will and testament I was made sole heir to his vast property. That smothered all my ambition. I had wealth, and it seemed to me that it was my duty to enjoy it.

Up to this time I had resided in P——, my native place, but after coming into my property, I thought that a winter in New York was just what my system required; and I packed up accordingly and departed for Gotham.

It was at the fashionable boarding-house, presided over by the affable Madame de Lizma, that I first saw Miss Claribel Glaverneck. She was an orphan, and supported herself by her pen, she informed me. She said she was the author of that deeply interesting novel, entitled "Viola; or Sixteen Times Divorced. A Tale of Chicago."

I never saw the work. It was sufficient for me to see the authoress. Knowing that she was an orphan I could but pity her, and knowing my pity she could but love me.

I escorted her to the theatre and to the opera, and we rode together in Central Park. I bought a span of splendid horses especially for that purpose, because I knew that Claribel was fond of riding. And she could drive, too, and liked to make a sensation, while holding the ribbons, by indulging in some rather fast driving.

I must confess that I was rather proud of her, and I fancied that the young men of my acquaintance envied me exceedingly. Such a really stylish woman could hardly be found in the whole city as Miss Claribel Glaverneck.

One of my acquaintances insinuated that she cared more for my money than she did for me; but what cared I for such insinuations? The poor fellow was only envious, of course, and upon my honor I couldn't blame him.

Before I had known her a month I was sure that she loved me. Every glance of her beautiful eyes, every action told me so. Ah! what exquisite bliss it is to feel that we are beloved by a beautiful woman! There's nothing like it, I assure you.

I remember one night—ah! shall I ever forget that night? Methinks not. We had been to a concert, and before retiring to our rooms we went into the public parlor. No one was there—we were alone. I had given her several strong hints before that time regarding the state of my heart, but now, this night, I had determined to tell her all.

She seated herself upon the sofa, and I placed myself beside her; and for several minutes "the beating of our own hearts was all the sound we heard." This growing rather monotonous, I broke the silence with my own dulcet-toned voice.

"Claribel," said I, taking her little hand in mine, "Claribel, there is one thing that I can no longer conceal from thee, and that is my love. Perhaps you have suspected that I loved you, long ere this. I hope you have, for otherwise the shock to such a delicate organization as yours must be terrible. If you feel like fainting—if you experience a sensation of weakness in your spinal column, as though the marrow had all run out, just say so, and I will continue my story in the morning."

"Go on, go on," she murmured.

"I will, my darling, I will. I have told thee of my love; oh! canst thou, dost thou return it? Wilt thou be mine?"

She raised her glorious eyes to my face.

I was almost sure of her answer before, but I had the blessed certainty now. With a convulsive sob she buried her face in my bosom, and clasping her white arms around my neck, she answered, in a voice between a chuckle and a sob:—

"O Alexander, how have I longed for this hour! I do love you, and I will be thine."

We kissed—a lingering "sweetness long drawn out" was that first sweet kiss of love; and while our lips met, I slipped upon her finger the betrothal ring.

Let us drop the curtain. When that scene comes up before my mind's eye, I—well, I lose all control of myself. Let us hurry on. I don't feel at all well, I assure you. "John, wet a napkin and bind it around my head; there, that will do." And now we will return to my friend Althof.

It was about eight o'clock in the evening when he arrived.

"Take a chair, my dear fellow, and help yourself to a cigar."

I don't know whether I have told you that Althof and I were schoolmates? Well, we were, and the friendship that we conceived for each other in our youth had never been allowed to grow cold.

And so we sat there in my parlor, smoking and chatting in a free and easy fashion, Althof telling me all the latest news from P—, who was married and who was soon to be, who was dead and who was ill, and in fact anything and everything that he thought might possibly interest me.

"And now about the ring," said I, when Althof declared that he had told me all there was to tell.

"Oh yes, the ring, to be sure. I had quite forgotten that. I wish I could find the owner of it."

"What! did you not tell me you bought it?"

"Oh yes, I paid for it, Thornhock, but I wasn't intending to purchase diamonds when I got this."

"Explain yourself, man. What do you mean by your did and your didn't?"

"Well, keep cool, my boy, and I'll tell you all about it, although I've never told the story before, and I wouldn't now except to a particular friend.

"Perhaps you didn't know that I was in town about a fortnight ago?" continued Althof, lighting a fresh cigar.

"No, of course not."

"I meant to drop in and see you, but I'd forgotten both the street and number; and so, as I couldn't call on you, I concluded to visit the theatre, and pass the evening there. I got a seat in the parquet, with an ancient looking female, who had evidently loved and lost a man while she was in the bloom of her youth—for I am positively sure she had never been married—sat on my left hand side, while, for a pleasing contrast, a magnificent young lady, dressed in the very height of the fashion, sat next me on the right.

"I imagined myself the personification of autumn (my gorgeous red hair answering for the 'glowing tints' of that most poetic season, you know), with the glorious summer on one side, and a bitter cold winter on the other. I believe this to be the most poetic fancy that ever flashed across this

brain of mine, Thornhock, and therefore I consider it worthy of mention."

"Yes, yes, very good. Go on."

"Oh, don't be impatient, my dear fellow. I am going to tell you all about the affair, if you'll only give me a chance, although I declare, to begin with, that I'd rather not."

"Well, I won't interrupt you again."

"As I said before, the young lady on my right was a magnificent looking creature, and when she turned her dark eyes on me, upon my honor, Thornhock, I felt a thrill through every nerve."

"I am not a ladies' man, as you know. I admire the sex, of course, as what reasonable man does not, but I never possessed the power or the inclination to make myself extremely agreeable to them. I never courted a woman in my life, and until that night at the theatre I don't know that I ever saw the woman whom I was extraordinarily desirous to call mine own."

"The young lady was accompanied by an old gentleman, who sat behind a large hooked nose, that resembled a parrot's bill, and who peered out at you through a pair of the blackest and most villainous looking eyes that I think were ever turned upon my face, whom I took to be her father; and I know I wondered at the time how it could be possible that such a demoniacal looking old sinner *could* be the father of such a beautiful woman."

"Well, I kept one eye on the young lady and the other on the play, giving an occasional glance at the old gentleman's nose."

"Meantime I found that the old gentleman was keeping his 'evil eye' on me, though what he found to interest him in my very uninteresting face was more than I could imagine. I was very sure I had never seen him before, though it was possible that he thought mine a familiar countenance, and was trying to remember where he had seen it. Be this as it might, I became so exceedingly nervous under his steady gaze that if the first act had been ten minutes longer, I should have been obliged to leave the theatre."

"But the curtain fell, the old gentleman whispered something to the young lady, then arose and went out, and I breathed free again."

"Will you allow me to look at your programme?" I said, turning to the young lady."

"She handed it to me, and as our fingers

met, a tear fell from her dark eyes and splashed upon the paper."

"I'm the most tender-hearted fellow in the world, where there's a woman concerned; and a woman in tears is a sight that I never could look upon unmoved, and especially *such* a woman as this."

"I wanted to inquire into the cause of her sorrow; and I would have been glad to have said something to her of a soothing nature, but I couldn't think of anything to say. My feelings were overcoming me very fast. I tried to read the programme, but a mist came before my eyes and jumbled the letters all together in one confused mass. Then I looked up at the young lady, and at that moment another tear dropped from the end of that Grecian nose. This was too much. I could restrain myself no longer, and so I spoke."

"'Oh, why that tear?' I asked, in a whisper."

"You will notice, Thornhock, that this question wasn't original with me. I had read it somewhere before. Besides, I don't generally express myself in that style in ordinary conversation."

"'Oh, why that tear?'"

"'Oh, do not ask me! I—I cannot tell you. I'm very—I'm very unhappy—hush! he's coming,' she whispered, seemingly very much agitated."

"'Coming? If you mean your father'—"

"'Alas! he is not my father.'"

"'Not your father?'"

"'No, no, thank Heaven for that; but I am—I am in his power!'"

"'Darn it!' said I, 'that's too bad,' forgetting in my sympathy for the young lady the inelegance of my expression; but she didn't appear to notice it. 'But can't I help you, my dear young lady?' I asked."

"'Oh, if I could only trust you!' she murmured, looking up into my face through her tears."

"'Oh, if you only would!' I answered. 'I feel that I could go through fire and water to serve you, my dear young lady.'"

"'But 'tis useless. There is no hope for me. You cannot help me. I am in his power. Hush! he comes.'"

"Well, he did come this time, sure enough, and so I straightened myself back in the seat, and the young lady dried her tears; and if the hook-nosed gentleman suspected anything, he didn't let his suspicions appear in the expression of his face."

"Ah, little did he suspect that, concealed in the fold of the young lady's dress, lay her own white hand, clasped in the broad palm of your friend, Ned Althof.

"Until the curtain went down on the last act, we remained joined together, palm to palm. She felt that she had my sympathy, I'm sure, and that might have been worth something, even if I could render her no material aid; or at least I thought so.

"The old gentleman went out into the aisle first, the young lady followed, and I came close behind her. She lingered a moment, and her companion pressed on into the crowd.

"Now tell me," I whispered, "tell me quickly, oh! cannot I help you in some way? If you are in his power, tell me how. Has he any claim upon you? What right?"

"He is my husband," she whispered, in a snickering voice.

"Husband!"

"She sprang forward and caught the hooked-nosed gentleman's arm, turning back just once to give me a roguish smile before disappearing in the crowd."

"Ha, ha! Althof, you were sold indeed," cried I.

"Sold! Bah, I haven't told you all yet. Of course I realized in a moment that I had made a confounded fool of myself. I don't know why it is, Thornhock, but I never can get the country air out of my clothes. Everybody knows that I came from the country; and this fair damsel knew it, I suppose, the moment she fixed her glorious orbs upon my innocent looking countenance.

"And so," thought I, as I wended my way back to my hotel, "this young lady, being of a mischievous disposition, thought that she would amuse herself a little at the expense of a countryman."

"It didn't trouble me a great deal, because I should probably never see the lady again, and luckily for me, I had no acquaintance with me to tell the story at home; and so I was pretty well satisfied with myself, notwithstanding the pleasant little game that had been played upon my tender feelings.

"Some people can't enjoy a joke at their own expense, but I can. I remember that I was in excellent humor when I entered my room at the hotel that night. 'If I ever meet that young lady again,' said I, 'we'll laugh over this together,' and I essayed to

take out my watch for the purpose of winding it up for the night. Bless you, Thornhock, there was no watch there!

"I assure you, my dear fellow, that I never felt quite so much like a fool as I did when I made that very important discovery. I began to see the *joke* of the thing then, and I saw much more distinctly, when jamming my hand (the very hand that had clasped hers!) into my pocket, I found that my pocket-book, containing nearly three hundred dollars had also disappeared!

"I couldn't believe it at first, and I searched every pocket carefully, before I could be satisfied that I had actually been robbed by such a really stylish looking woman."

"Oh, Althof, my boy," cried I, breaking in upon him, "I didn't think you were so verdant, upon my soul, I didn't. But never mind, live and learn. When you've been in the city as long as I have, it won't be so easy to take you in."

"Hold! Just wait till I get through with my story. She didn't make such a 'soft thing' out of me, after all. In searching the second time, I found in the pocket where my money had been; this diamond ring, which must have slipped from her finger while she was drawing out my pocket-book."

"Oh, that's the way you bought it?"

"Yes. It cost me, reckoning my watch at eighty dollars, just about three hundred besides, and a jeweller who examined the ring, said that the diamonds were worth three hundred and fifty. So you see I'm only about thirty dollars out of pocket, at the worst."

"And so ends your story."

"Yes, for the present; but if I ever meet the young lady again, I shall offer her the ring at a slight advance on the cost price. And now that I have told my story, let me hear yours, which must be much more pleasant to relate, inasmuch as you have succeeded so much better in your love affairs than I have. And, by the way, when are you to be married?"

"Our wedding is to take place next week. But before I tell you how I won my love, allow me to introduce you to her. I'll just step across the hall, and learn if she is ready to receive us," said I, rising, and leaving the room.

I rapped at Claribel's door, and the dear creature opened it.

"Uncle Fernando has come," said she, "and he's very impatient to see you."

She had told me before, that she had an uncle in Baltimore, and we had been expecting him on for several days, and so I hurried in to see the old gentleman, whom I found to be a very genial sort of person, although there was an expression about his face that was anything but prepossessing.

"And now, Claribel," said I, after exchanging civilities with her uncle, "I want to introduce a very dear and valued friend to you. He's in my parlor. Shall I bring him in?"

"By all means, Alexander. I shall always be happy to receive your friends," replied the dear girl. Thinking of Althof's misfortune, and my own happiness, I was obliged to stop and kiss her rosy mouth once or twice before I could tear myself away; Then I ran back into my room.

"Come, Fred, prepare yourself, for I'm about to introduce you to one of the most dazzlingly beautiful women you ever beheld. You think I'm proud of her, I suppose. Well, I am, for she's a woman to be proud of, even if I do say so. Come."

I led the way, and Fred followed close at my heels. I flung open Claribel's door and discovered her standing in the middle of the room, looking as royally beautiful as any queen that I ever had the good fortune to be acquainted with.

"Claribel," said I, advancing with a proud step, "this is"—

"Oh!" screamed she, falling into Uncle Fernando's arms.

"Bless my eyes!" ejaculated Althof, springing forward. "Hang me if that isn't

the one that robbed me of my watch and money!"

"The game's up," said Fernando, dashing out of the room, and bounding down the stairs, and so out into the street.

"Oh, Claribel!" I cried, "what does this mean? It cannot be so, I will not believe that you are!"—

"Pshaw! Thornhock, when you've been in the city as long as I have it won't be so easy to take you in," cried Althof, repeating my own words.

But I did not heed him. I ran to Claribel, and throwing my arms around her, begged her to explain it all, as I felt sure that she could.

"Do you know this ring, young lady?" demanded Althof.

"Yes," said Claribel, releasing herself from my embrace, "it is one you gave me, Alexander,"

"Oh! Fool, fool, fool!" I yelled, snatching the ring, and stamping it under my feet.

"And now you can do with me as you will—I am in *your* power," said Claribel, addressing Althof.

"No, no, let her go," I groaned. "You are free, Claribel. Go, and never let me see your face again."

Then our wedding must be postponed, I suppose?"

"Yes, adieu."

We left the room together, and all that night I was busy packing up preparatory to my departure from Gotham. Althof helped me, and the next morning we shook the dust of that city from our feet and returned to P— together. And now I have told *why our wedding was postponed.*

THE SHADOWS OF THE HEART.

'TIS strange that often when most glad,
Enwoven through our merry hours,
Should run a thread so dark, so sad,
Like death among the summer flowers.
A laugh may ring in happy glee,
And mingle with the saddest strain;
The lips may smile,—the heart may be
O'erburdened with a secret pain.

The beams of love and friendship bright
May for a time our hearts beguile;
The world were dark but for their light,
And living hardly worth the while.
If love is true and friendship real,
How sweet to live, how hard to die,
When throbbing hearts can passion feel,
And thought is flashed from eye to eye!

But, ah! too oft can love betray,
And friendship's hand grow cold as night!
Life is not all a primrose way;
Were shadow not, there were no light.
We all have hours in which we yearn
For something never known before;
And all our days we seldom learn
That what we have is sweetest store.

"My heart's desire, oh, give to me!"
So prayeth oft the restless soul
Who thinks that bliss is still to be,
And that he yet may reach the goal.
But years pass on, and youth has flown,
With all its hopes, with all its fire;
And sadly to our hearts we own
We never reach our hearts' desire.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

HOME-NURSING.

THE administration of food and medicine is amongst the most important of a nurse's duties, and much of her success will depend upon the amount of careful attention she devotes to this branch of her work. As to the giving of medicines, a nurse's duty is very simple; all she has to do is to carry out the doctor's orders to the very letter. A nurse's part is to yield implicit obedience to higher authority, and it is never her place to turn critic; to this we add, that no nurse has a right to give, or withhold, even one dose on her responsibility; nor to make the slightest alteration in treatment, unless she has received express permission to exercise her own discretion. Truism as this may sound, experience teaches that the caution is anything but superfluous, especially where the nurse's ignorance makes her fancy herself capable of forming an independent judgment on matters of which she knows virtually nothing. As illustration, take a case where a sleeping-draught having been ordered to a patient worn out with pain and want of rest, the nurse remarked to a friend who expressed a hope of speedy relief: "Oh, I daresay he will soon be better. The doctor is coming early to see the effect of his medicine; but I don't believe in such things, so I shall not let John have any."

Poor, unfortunate John paid the penalty; and I believe the doctor was fairly puzzled over the failure of a remedy he had reckoned upon as certain. Indeed, I have often thought that if doctors knew half that goes on in sick-rooms, they would find the clew to many a puzzle. At the same time, of course, a doctor's time is valuable; and in dealing with a nurse of average intelligence, he has a right to expect that his orders are being faithfully carried out, without the pressure of constant questioning.

But with the best will in the world, the inexperienced nurse is apt to undervalue precision in the administration of medicine, and one occasionally hears, when a dose has been forgotten, some such remark as: "Oh, well, I can give double next time." Yet, the double dose, instead of doing good,

may cause positive injury, especially when very powerful drugs are being used. So necessary, indeed, is exactitude, that I would urge every nurse to make a rule of reading the directions on the medicine bottle *each* time a dose is poured out, and never, under any circumstances, to deviate from the prescribed quantity. This plan has the additional advantage of lessening the probability of mistaking external for internal remedies. But it will not do to rely upon this only; all preparations for external use, even if not marked "Poison," must be kept in a separate place, and should be put into bottles of a different color from those containing medicines for internal use. It is also desirable to have them fluted, so as to be recognized by touch as well as by sight; and on no account should they be left about after being used. Every bottle, too, that has held either medicine or lotion should be thoroughly washed out, and the label removed before it is used again for any other purpose. Minute, even fidgety, as these directions sound, they are not at all too particular, in view of those terrible results of carelessness which are to be found in the records of even hospital work. If the trained nurse needs to be on her guard against such mistakes as giving a fatal dose of carbolic acid, it surely follows that the inexperienced can hardly be too scrupulously particular in taking every possible precaution against misadventure.

In all cases where the quantity of medicine ordered is not a divisional part of the bottle, each dose should be poured into a graduated medicine glass or spoon. If the former is used, it should be held in such a position as to bring the indicating marks just on a level with the nurse's eye; and in using divisionally marked bottles, the bottle should always be held up to the light. In both cases the object is to make sure that the fluid just reaches the desired point, and this cannot be accurately ascertained if the bottle or glass is held below the nurse's eye. In no case is it safe to trust to ordinary spoons for measuring medicines, as they differ so much in size. Thus, the table-

spoon in some households will be hardly larger than the dessert-spoon in others; and consequently the dose given to a patient would vary according to the family plate. The medical teaspoon means one drachm, and contains sixty drops; the dessert-spoon holds two drachms; and an ounce is equivalent to the familiar "two tablespoonfuls."

When drop-doses are ordered, they should invariably be measured in a minim-glass, for a drop will vary considerably in size, according to the consistency of the fluid, and the shape and thickness of the bottle used. In cases of emergency, when no minim-glass is at hand, wetting the edge of the bottle will help to regulate dropping, and it will also be found easier if the hand rests upon something steady.

It is well to make a rule of shaking the bottle each time a dose is poured out, and of immediately replacing the cork. The medicine-glass must also be thoroughly washed out after each time of using; a good many home-nurses seem to consider that, with only one patient, it is quite enough if the glass is washed out once a day; but, apart from graver considerations, a dirty glass will by no means sweeten either the medicine or the patient's temper. When oily or very strong-smelling liquids are being used, a separate glass should be kept for their benefit. It is really astonishing how long the flavor of oil will cling to a glass or spoon. I well remember thinking a cod-liver oil glass had been made thoroughly clean and free from smell, and then being undeceived by the next victim, who anything but appreciated his oiled tonic.

But not only must medicine be given in proper quantities; it is equally important that it should be given at the right times. Unless special directions are given, the usual hours for "three times a day" are eleven, three, and seven. "Bedtime," to a bed-ridden patient, means from ten to eleven, according to previous habits. Before or after food means within twenty minutes of a meal. When ordered "every three or four hours," medicine is to be continued through the night; and it is always well, in such cases, to ask whether the patient is to be roused out of sleep when a dose is due. It is also important to know whether, if medicine ordered after food has been forgotten at the proper time, it may be given when remembered. Should the doctor's wishes not be known, it is best to

wait till the next meal, and not to risk giving a dose that might be injurious.

When the patient is too weak to sit up, it is a good plan to give the medicine in a small "feeder," to be obtained at any chemist's; or when small doses only are being given, a china spoon made for the purpose, and covered all but a little bit at the thin end, will be found convenient. Never tease a patient by such remarks as "It's nearly medicine-time;" he is probably quite aware of the fact, and if not, is hardly likely to be cheered by a reminder. Of course, there is a vast difference in the way in which patients take medicine, but, as a rule, it is a trial, especially where there is great weakness; and a nurse should spare no pains to make this necessary penalty of illness as light as possible.

To some persons, the taking of pills is a regular *pons asinorum*, and not a few people will gravely declare that they "cannot" take a pill; yet they are in the habit of taking food many times the bulk of the innocent little article which they make such ridiculous and exaggerated efforts to swallow. It is just these efforts that create the difficulty, and if taken simply and quietly, there is really no medicine easier to manage. If the pill is tasteless, let it be taken lightly between the lips, and a drink of water will carry it down with no trouble. If disagreeable to the taste, it is better to place the pill as far back as possible on the tongue, and then take a good draught of water or any light beverage. Let the most inveterate of pill-haters give this simplest of methods a fair trial, and he will be quite an exception if he does not own his difficulties gone.

And here, let me remind my readers that pills are apt to become dry and useless if kept for any length of time; and this accounts for the wonder often expressed over the failure of such a remedy, which "always used to do me good," and which probably would again if the pills were freshly made up.

Powders are frequently ordered, and to some people, form the easiest way of taking medicine; whilst, speaking from personal experience, I should say there is nothing more objectionable, unless carefully managed. If small, a powder may be taken dry by putting it far back on the tongue; or it may be mixed in a little milk or water, and swallowed quickly, dregs and all. A better way is to mix with a very little water into a

stiff paste, and gradually add about a wine-glassful more water, stirring all the time, till the powder is thoroughly dissolved. I have known a patient able to take a dessert-spoonful of powder at a time, in this way, who shuddered at the idea of half a tea-spoonful in water.

In dealing with children, if the old-fashioned spoonful of jam, or honey is used, be sure the powder is carefully placed in the middle and well covered over; otherwise, the only effect will be to turn the patient against both powder and sweetener. Powders are sometimes ordered to patients in a semi-conscious state, and unable to bear raising in bed; in such cases, the best way is to place the powder on the end of an ordinary paper or fruit knife; pass this as far back in the mouth as possible, and invert; and the act of swallowing thus set up, will complete itself with no further trouble.

Saline purgative medicine should be given with plenty of warm water, and on an empty stomach. The saline waters should also be given warm, and this can easily be done by pouring the dose into a cup, placed in boiling water. Doctors often omit to mention such details, of which many intelligent patients are quite ignorant.

Sleeping-draughts should not be given till all preparations for the night are completed; and after the dose has been administered, the patient should be told to try and compose himself for sleep. On no account must talking be allowed, and the room should be darkened and kept perfectly quiet. Only under such conditions does the medicine get a fair chance; and it is useless to follow a sleeping-draught with bustling, setting to-rights, and ceaseless chatter, a practice only too common in home-nursing.

Castor oil is another test of a nurse's skill; and in large doses it is undoubtedly a difficult thing to give to a patient in bed, especially when there is a rooted aversion to oil in any shape. There are many vehicles in use for its administration, such as wine, milk, soup, or coffee. The last-named is perhaps the best, and may be taken as typical, the method of giving being the same, whatever medium is chosen. Take some strong coffee, without sugar or milk; thoroughly wash out the medicine-glass with it, leaving a couple of tablespoonfuls at the bottom; on to this gradually pour the oil, being very careful that none shall touch the sides; give the patient a little coffee to

drink, and then the oil in one draught, followed quickly by some more coffee. Taken thus, there will be scarcely any perceptible taste; but if lemon is liked, a still better plan is to suck a slice before and after the oil. Much of the difficulty of retaining castor oil is due to the disgust produced by its mal-administration; but if the same difficulty arises in spite of care, it is better to leave the question of perseverance for the doctor's decision.

Cod-liver oil is another troublesome remedy, at least with adults, and yet it is so valuable in many cases, that a nurse may well devote her best energies to making it agree with her patient. It may be given in the same way as castor oil; but a good many people prefer the lighter wines, as ginger, raisin, or orange, to other mediums. As a rule, it should be taken after meals; but some patients can manage better by beginning with a dose just before going to bed.

In commencing a course of oil, the amount ordered is frequently a teaspoonful; but if the patient cannot retain even this, try him with less and less, till you find how much or how little he can manage; continue with this for a few days, and then very gradually increase to the full dose. In this way, many patients who declared they never could take oil, have been brought round to managing it easily. Should, however, bilious symptoms appear, the oil had better be discontinued for two or three days, and begun again with a lesser dose. I have known patients persevere in spite of warnings, and pay the penalty in such a severe bilious attack as to set them forever against a remedy that, properly managed, would have been invaluable. Indeed, without waiting for warning, it is always well, in a long cod-liver oil course, to drop taking it every now and then for a few days.

All nauseous medicine should be taken in one draught, with the mouth well open, and in many cases compressing the nostrils will entirely do away with disagreeable flavors. I have insisted upon the fact that it is not a nurse's place to interfere with the patient's treatment, but should she happen to know of any particular idiosyncrasy, it will do no harm to mention the fact. Some people are easily affected by medicine in general, and some by special drugs, and a doctor will be glad to know of any peculiarity, provided the information is properly given.

AN ADVENTURE IN BEHRING SEA.

BY ROSHOW BEZONE, JR.

IN the spring of 1868, the territory formerly known as Russian America was ceded to the United States; and all the trading privileges which before had been held by the Russian American Fur Company were thrown open to the world. Little was known of the country, even in our Pacific seaports; true, the Western Union Telegraph Company had explored certain parts of it in their attempt to open communication with Asia, but they had confined themselves more to its geographical bearings than its resources. American whalers, in their cruises after oil, had entered every gulf and bay on its coast; but as they had been debarred from landing, except when in need of wood and water, their knowledge, beyond that of locality, was extremely slight. Of course many reports were in circulation respecting the wonderful quantity and quality of the furs obtained there, but all of them of a vague and uncertain character. However, the people of the coast, and of San Francisco in particular, quickly prepared to take advantage of any opening that might show itself; merchants began fitting out small vessels to trade there; old miners who had "done" California and Nevada gathered their traps together for a prospecting tour to this new field of enterprise; land speculators hurried to stake out claims near the little towns of Sitka and Kodiak; needy adventurers by the score crowded every means of transportation, most of them careless or ignorant of future prospects, but going in the hope that some good would come of it.

A desire to see the world, which had already taken me over the greater portion of it, landed me in the winter of the above year in San Francisco. Whatever wish I may have had to remain permanently in that delightful place was quickly taken out of my head when the opportunity presented itself of going to this unknown northern region. The way in which this happened was as follows: A number of gentlemen had fitted out a schooner, the *Katie*, for a sealing and trading voyage, but just as she was on the point of departure the supercargo was taken sick, and they had to delay sail-

ing until they could find some one to fill his place; hearing of this, I offered my services, and though I possessed but few of the requirements necessary for the situation, I was accepted as the best substitute they could readily obtain.

Why describe the sea voyage? They are all very similar; the alternation of wind and calm; the ineffable glories of a sunrise; the quenching, as it were, of the molten orb in the water at evening; the golden pathway made by the moon across the restless sea; all of these can be seen in any vessel and in any clime. Let it suffice, therefore, to say that on the second of May, after a fair run of three weeks, we came to anchor off the island of St. George, in the south-eastern portion of Behring Sea. It had been a foggy day, but the wind had partially cleared the air, and we could see quite plainly the outline of the jagged cliffs, and wild hilltops covered with snow.

It was our intention to erect a station on this island, enter into an agreement with the natives, and, thereby, being the first comers, secure a monopoly of the fur seals which come there yearly in large numbers. In carrying out our design we were eminently successful, and finding that this was to constitute the principal part of our business, I concluded to let the schooner make the rest of the voyage (which was to extend to the coast of Siberia) without me, and to stay on the island, in order to more effectually superintend the business; so, having landed a large quantity of goods and provisions, the schooner prepared to take her departure.

It was a mournful day to me when, having bade the captain and the interpreter good-by, I saw them row out through the surf, and watched them until they disappeared in the eddying mist, which had already hidden the *Katie* from sight. They were not to return until the latter part of November, nearly seven months, and it would be difficult for the reader to realize the feeling of loneliness that now took possession of me. I was entirely isolated, having no one with whom I could associate but the native Aleuts, whose language I understood but very imperfectly.

However, there was nothing to do but to make the best of it, and I therefore determined to thoroughly survey the island, as a means of occupying my mind for two or three weeks, until the seals should begin to arrive. Though but a small place, it was certainly a wild one; centuries of rough usage by the elements had so diversified its naturally irregular outlines as to leave it one mass of steep hills, intersected by long, dark valleys. With the exception of three or four little strips of beach, high cliffs beetled out over the water at almost every point, and into the rocky caverns at their base the sea dashed and thundered with a perpetual roar. So rocky was the soil that I could not find even a shrub, though in the summer months long, rank grasses grew everywhere in great abundance. Overhead hung almost a perpetual fogbank, making the day well nigh as gloomy as the night; sometimes the mists would scatter for a day or two, and I could see, far across the water to the northward, the tops of the hills on the island of St. Paul, another seal island, considerably larger than St. George.

The natives were very kind and good-natured; every day they would go far across the hills, and return laden with different kinds of game, or with the eggs of sea-fowl, which they obtained by being lowered a hundred feet or more down the face of the cliff, and would always bring them to me, in order that I might have the first choice. I soon became well acquainted with all the inhabitants upon the island; used to attend the little receptions they gave upon their "name's day," as it is called by the Russians; acted as godfather for their children when they were christened—for all the Aleutians are members of the Greek Church—on which occasions I yet further endeared myself to them by keeping "open house," and provided an unlimited amount of tea, sugar and crackers for their entertainment. When the seals came there was work enough to do; what with driving, killing, salting and packing, keeping store, acting as governor, doctor and adviser, I had my time fully taken up. And so months went by, the season passed over, and I began counting the weeks that must elapse before the Katie would return to take on board the large lot of furs we had collected and stored in the *Lofka* on the beach.

One night in the middle of October I was awakened from my sleep by some one com-

ing into my little cabin and roughly shaking me by the shoulder; starting up, I saw by a strange glare of light that seemed to fill the room, the *Nirachic*, or head native on the island. He made an ineffectual attempt to speak, and pointed with his hand to the window, while his face wore an expression of ineffable fear and consternation. In an instant I was at the window; both heaven and earth seemed one blaze of light, and for a moment I thought that the old volcano, which had slumbered for ages beneath the island, had again started to life. A second glance, however, brought to my mind the hardly more desirable conviction that the storehouse, containing our entire supply of provisions, and the adjoining outhouses filled with salted seals, which the natives had prepared for their winter's sustenance, were wrapped in a sheet of flames.

Now that two years have passed, and I am sitting in my quiet library writing this, I cannot recall my feelings at that moment without experiencing a thrill of horror. A bitter cold gale blew from the north, laden with the inevitable mist, which, though it prevented the fire from being seen at any distance, served by its refractions to fill with redoubled intensity of light the little space in which it was visible.

When I reached the spot the natives had all arrived, but, too terror-stricken for motion, were stupidly gazing at the great surging flames, which they now beheld for the first time in their lives. Of course my first cry was for water. We were wholly unprepared for anything of this kind; the pond from which we obtained our supply of fresh water was more than half a mile distant, and it was, therefore, out of the question to go there; the sea, however, was within three hundred yards of the building, but in order to reach it it was necessary to descend a steep, narrow path, leading down the side of a cliff, difficult during the day, but at night dangerous. Still it must be done, and in less than two minutes I had all the inhabitants of the village—men, women and children—with the exception of three or four of the older men, whom I kept to assist me in breaking out some of the goods, despatched to obtain the precious liquid.

All our exertions proved wholly futile; the fire, when discovered, was under too great headway to be subdued by any of the rude appliances we could command, and with the exception of three boxes of hard-

bread, which I succeeded in breaking out, the entire building, with outhouses and contents, was reduced to a smouldering heap before our eyes.

It was about three o'clock in the morning when I told the natives, who, now that the first excitement had passed, were making loud lamentations, that they had better go to their homes and get rested, and that I would tell them, after I had had time to think it over, what had best be done. For me it was no time for resting; my mind was well nigh paralyzed by the sudden calamity that had overtaken me, and it was long before I could collect my thoughts sufficiently to give the subject reasonable consideration. What was to be done? Both seals and birds had left us for their winter's sojourn in a milder climate; fish there were none, for the seals had driven them away; there was absolutely nothing on the island that we could use for food.

The natives had made their weekly purchase of provisions five days before, and I knew from their natural improvidence that they could not have more than two days' ordinary supply on hand; in my own house I had enough to keep them three or four days more; but what then? The Katie would not return for five weeks, and head winds might delay her two or three weeks longer. What were we to live upon in the meantime? We must certainly go to St. Paul, which was the only settlement within attainable distance, to procure food; but then the equally perplexing question arose, how should we get there? St. Paul was only forty miles away, and in good weather, with an ordinary ship's boat, I should have thought nothing of the trip; but at this season of the year fair weather was exceptional, and our only means of conveyance was a *bidara*, or Aleutian skin-boat. This was a large, ungainly craft, being about as symmetrically formed as a child's Noah's ark. It was made of a rude framework of driftwood and whalebone, covered with the skins of the sea-lion, which had been dried in the sun and sewn together; it was about thirty feet long by twelve beam, and propelled by oars, yet carried a small, square sail to be used when the wind was directly aft. On discharging our vessel we had found it very useful; but though very seaworthy when newly oiled, after it had been in the water a few hours, the skin covering became damp and rotten, so that a very slight pressure

would break it; yet this was the only means of transportation we had, and go we must.

In the morning I assembled all the natives, and having told them the plan I had decided upon, made them bring all the food they had in their houses, which, with what I had, I placed under the charge of the *Nirachic*, in order that regular rations might be served out, and nothing wasted. It required sixteen men to man the *bidara*, and that no hard feelings might be created, I let the able-bodied men of the village, amounting altogether to forty, draw lots in order to see which of them should go on the expedition. Having decided this, and seen that the boat was put in proper condition for the trip, I sat down and wrote a letter containing a statement of our misfortune to the captain of the Katie, so that in case we should never return, and upon his arrival he should find no one alive on the island, he might know the cause of it; and I also told him that he would find the furs in the *Lofka* all right.

Our wish now was for a moderately pleasant day, in order to start; and luckily for us we did not have to wait long, for the next morning brought an unusually calm sea, with a light breeze from the south. Parting kisses and blessing were given, and we were soon off, steering directly for our destination, and going as fast as wind and oar could carry us. It was a delightful day, the wind staying by us and aiding us so that at four o'clock in the afternoon we landed on the island whose dark cliffs we had seen for hours rising higher and higher out of the blue sea. There were several American companies on the island, and as they had an abundant supply of provisions, I found no difficulty in obtaining all I wished; so we worked late into the night in getting them from the storehouse down to the landing, that we might be in readiness to start by daylight, our skin-boat having been dried and oiled in the meantime.

It was some time after midnight when, just as I was on the point of bidding my entertainers good-night and seeking an hour or two of rest, one of my men, named Evan Switzoff, a favorite of mine, came to me and said he would like to have me come to the church, as he was about to be married. It seemed that he had been engaged to an Aleutian girl on St. Paul, Natalia by name, for some three years, and that the present was the first time during this period that he

had had an opportunity of seeing her; and though there was a dangerous trip home in anticipation, neither of them was willing to allow so excellent an occasion for consummating their long-postponed happiness to pass by unnoticed. I endeavored to point out the danger to which he was exposing her by so doing; but though I might have convinced him, I found that argument was entirely wasted upon her, and so gave it up.

The little church was brilliantly lighted by innumerable wax candles of all sizes, from an immense one six feet long and a foot in diameter, down to the thin tapers which some of the natives carried in their hands. The bride was wonderfully arrayed, considering the place and the short notice she had received, being resplendent in a very light nicely fitting calico dress, with crinoline, a little white bonnet, and a set of imitation coral jewelry; but the acme of style was reached through a pair of green kid gloves, in which the fair one had imprisoned her hands for the first time. Beside this "glass of fashion," poor Evan in his pea-jacket made but a sorry appearance; however, love seemed to overcome all these minor difficulties, and after a long service, rendered wearisome by perpetual bowings, but redeemed by beautiful chanting, they were pronounced man and wife, and the whole company went to the bride's father's to partake of such refreshment as he might provide; after which I, at least, sought my much-needed rest.

The next day was also a fine one; the sun rose on a perfectly calm sea, and having bade our kind friends adieu, we slowly rowed our now heavily laden boat out of the little harbor. Hour after hour passed by, and though we did not progress as rapidly as when the boat was empty, we still went along at a very good rate of speed, and St. Paul was becoming more and more faint in the distance. Owing to the immense amount of labor, both mental and physical, I had performed during the past few days, and the very small quantity of rest I had been able to obtain, I felt very tired, and about noon, seeing that all was going on well, I stretched myself out on a pile of boxes, so that I might get a little sleep. The sun was shining with unprotected supremacy, and I put my handkerchief over my face to protect it from the unwonted heat. The men were pulling easily; Natalia was seated by her husband, and just as I

dropped off I heard her singing an old Russian song, the burden of which was "*Coo-reet trokka tobacco.*"

I must have slept several hours, for when some one awoke me a great change had taken place; the sun was completely lost to sight by dark, thick folds of fog which intervened, and though there was as yet but little wind, our boat rose and fell on each wave of a long heavy swell that came rolling towards us from the northward, which I instantly recognized as the precursor of one of our fierce gales.

The steersman estimated that we must be about eight miles from St. George, and though he had been steering by compass for an hour or two, since the fog settled down on us, he seemed to be rather uncertain in precisely what direction our island lay. Taking the large oar by which the boat's course was directed, I sent the former helmsman forward to help row; and having made an estimation by the wind, the compass, and my predecessor's approximations, as to what our course should be, I headed the boat in that direction, and trusted to good fortune for a favorable result.

Time passed away, night came on, but we saw no signs of the island; in vain we strained our eyes over the white caps, which were now beginning to crest the waves; no sight of land was vouchsafed to us—only a great dread darkness on every hand. This soon became so intense that I could not see the oarsman nearest to me; still they pulled on, until one of them cried in a wild, hopeless way, "We have passed by the island!" thus giving verbal utterance to a fear I had felt but had not dared to express. The rowers stopped, and our boat, losing headway, swung heavily round into the trough of the sea. After a few moments' deliberation my mind was made up. Our only chance of escape was, if possible, to lay where we were until the morning, and then endeavor to find the island; so I headed the boat into the wind, and still having three or four men row easily to keep her from drifting, let the others take any manner of rest they had the heart for.

But what a night it was! The wind increased every hour, and, to add to our misery, about midnight our boat began to leak; first in one, and then in two, three, four and five places in quick succession, while at each lurch the slender framework would bend and twist as if it would break and let our

boat fall apart. There was no help for it—some of our goods must be thrown overboard; so clothing, sugar and tea were quickly passed over the side, and went surging along to the leeward. This lightened the boat; but every half hour showed a new leak to be stopped, while all the men were kept steadily at work rowing, or bailing out the water that came in torrents over the bows and sides.

At last the day began to dawn, but none too soon, for it was evident to me that we could not keep above water another hour. With the growing light the fog also lifted for a time, and to our great delight we saw the island of St. George under our lee, only about a mile off.

The shouts of joy from the natives were, however, quickly changed to cries of despair when they saw the long line of breakers which, beginning a quarter of a mile or so from the shore, swept in huge white waves with irresistible force upon the beach.

If we were to land, we must do so here. To go around to the leeward side of the island, while such a gale was blowing, would have been absolutely impossible, even had our boat been in good condition; as it was, we should sink before we had made a tenth of the distance. To row in over the surf would result in complete destruction of our boat, cargo, and most, if not all, of our lives, those reaching the shore having only a lingering death by starvation to look forward to; remaining where we were was equally certain death. For the first time in all my troubles I lost heart entirely. "And this," thought I, "is the end of all my planning—to perish miserably when within sight of the destination!"

It was at this moment of universal despair that Evan Switzoff, prompted to mental exertion more by the presence of a loved one than by any fear of personal danger, suggested carrying a surf-line to the shore, and by its aid thought that the boat might be safely taken through the breakers. Surf-lines are often used wherever it is necessary for boats to land on an unsheltered beach; it is merely a strong rope securely fastened to a buoy outside of the breakers, and thence carried through them to the land, where it is also fastened; a boat wishing to reach the shore, goes to the buoy, and the rope having been taken on board, two men stand at the bow, and two at the stern, and pull her through the surf stern forward, in much the

way small ferry-boats used to be taken across our western rivers; but should the men, by any mischance, lose their hold on the rope, the boat will instantly swing round and capsize. It is a dangerous method, but far preferable to landing without it, which in the present case was impossible.

The idea was eagerly received—but who was to take the line ashore? One suggested that it be fastened round a box, and that the waves would carry it to the beach, where we could see that the inhabitants of the village were now assembled, and that they would understand what it meant, and would fasten the line. In an instant the natives had seized a box, and had secured a line round it, preparatory to throwing it over. But I crushed their shortlived hope by telling them, what was an only too obvious fact, that there was but little chance of the box ever reaching the small strip of beach; in all probability it would be dashed to pieces on the long line of rocks which stretched for miles on either side, in which case their friends on shore would never think of looking for a line; and should the trial meet with such an end, we could not keep afloat long enough to make another. I ended by asking for a volunteer to undertake the dangerous work.

A short, though seemingly long silence, followed my words, each one looking at his neighbor in the hope that he would speak; though for my part, the danger in remaining seemed fully as great as that of going, and I would willingly have volunteered had I known how to swim. At last the silence was broken by a cry from Natalia, as Evan started up and began throwing off his clothes, while the rest of the men, as if released from some enchantment, fell to work bailing out the water which their delay had increased so much that it threatened to sink us instantly.

We were now just outside of the breakers, so we let go the anchor, and Evan, kissing the weeping Natalia, and grasping my hand as I fastened a line round his body, was off. Over the waves he went, now lost and now appearing, holding his head high up, while the line which I had ready and was playing out dragged loosely behind. The people on the beach seemed to have seen him, for they went a little way into the surf, ready to seize him when he should come near. All went well, and he was within one hundred yards of the beach, when a huge wave,

which had well nigh swamped us, rushed in upon him, towering up a deceitful mass of curling foam. He was so far away that I could not see what took place, but knew, by the rapidity with which the line ran through my hands, that some accident had befallen him. Soon we saw the natives rush into the water, and a moment after return and go higher up the beach. Then the strain upon the line, which for a time had ceased, was renewed, and feeling certain that they must have the other end, I made mine fast to a stronger rope, of which, thank fortune, we had an abundance, and launched it over the side. In about ten minutes there was a great waving of coats and hats on the beach, a signal, we took it, that the rope had been received and made fast; so, hauling it in as tightly as we could, we secured it with a buoy to the hawser of the anchor, and cut ourselves loose. It needed all our strength and skill, and even with them we were a dozen times on the very verge of destruction. But a good Providence willed it otherwise, for in a few minutes our keel touched lightly upon the sand, a hundred hands seized our gunwale on both sides, and we were run high and dry upon the beach.

That was indeed a joyful greeting. How many times I was embraced and kissed by men, women and children I cannot tell, and should be ashamed to, if I could; but in all this I missed Evan's face, and my first in-

quiry was for him. Having at length received a coherent direction, I ran to the little hut on the beach where I was told he lay. But I was not the first; poor Natalia! I found her kneeling over the cold, wet body of her husband, trying, by rubbing his face with her hands, and by kisses, to bring him back to life. I feared there was no hope; still, a moment after I was hurrying up the cliff to my house to procure some stimulants. It was useless—he had been neglected too long; and in humble likeness to One far greater, had saved our lives at the cost of his own.

My memory will lose much that it holds dear before I forget the sweet, sad harmony of those old Slavonian chants, one of rejoicing and one of sorrow, which the men sang as they stood around the little hut, now, alas, containing a double sacrifice.

The rest may be briefly told. By strict economy the reduced provisions we had succeeded in bringing from St. Paul proved more than sufficient. The Katie arrived in due season, landing abundant supplies, and taking on board in return the furs we had collected. With this event my banishment ended, and on the second of December, just seven months after my arrival, from the deck of our schooner, as we hurried southward, I saw the mist gather round that lone little island for the last time.

THE DEATH OF THE YEAR.

A CLOUD came out of the golden west,
A bell rang over the silent air;
The sun-god hurried away to rest,
Flushing with kisses each cloud he prest;
And, oh! but the day was fair.

"How brightly the year goes out," they said;
"The glow of the sunset lingers long,
Knowing the year will be over and dead,
Its sad hours over, its fleet hours fled,
With service of even-song."

"How sadly the year comes in," they said;
I listened and wondered in dusk of night;
To me no year that might come instead
Of the old friend numbered among the dead,
Could ever be half so bright.

The sun-kissed clouds grew pale and gray;
The bells hung silent in high mid-air,
Waiting to ring the year away

In strains that were ever too glad and gay
For me as I listened there.

Oh, hearts that beat in a million breasts!
Oh, lips that utter the same old phrase!
I wonder that never a sorrow rests
In words you utter to friends and guests
In the new year's strange, new days.

Is it just the same as it used to be?
Have new years only a gladder sound?
For ever and always it seems to me
That no new face can be sweet to see
As the old ones we have found.

There is no cloud in the darkened west,
The bell is silent in misty air;
The year has gone to its last long rest.
And I, who loved and who knew it best,
Shall meet it—God knows where!

NORSKE FARMS AND FARMERS.

WHILE traveling in Norway recently, the writer had an opportunity of obtaining some practical information in connection with farming in that country, and the following remarks are intended to illustrate the typical condition of the peasantry. In certain portions of the south, principally in the Christiania district, comparatively large farming operations are carried on. The contrast between Norwegian farms and those he has left behind at home, must strike the least observant tourist. Yet, though he sees much that seems to him rude and antiquated, one soon finds there are not a few lessons awaiting the agriculturist in the land of the vikings. So adverse are the conditions under which the Norske farmer struggles, that the latter must be almost "after the manner born." And it is not too much to add that, to an average farmer, certain bankruptcy would result where a Norwegian can make his bread and prosper.

The first impression of any ordinary Norwegian farm-steading is not very favorable. A cluster of houses, small and aged, crowd around a large dwelling-house, which generally looks somewhat dilapidated. But this appearance is deceptive; for the walls being of wood, they look old in a few years, and become blotched and seared by the weather. The roof is of the same material, or, in the case of the principal building, either of red tile or slab. Sometimes the dwelling-house is painted white, when the effect is to relieve the sombre aspect of the group. The walls are usually stout and thoroughly weather-proof, planks about four inches thick being used in their construction. These planks are placed edgewise on one another, crossed and countersunk at the angles, and calked in the seams with dry moss. A skin of thin wood is placed over the outside, while the interior is lined smoothly with boards. Inside, there is an air of comfort and cleanliness. A table stands in the centre of the chief room; and along the wall a bench runs, which serves for chairs, of which there is usually a deficiency. From pots on the floor, ivy is sometimes trained upwards to the roof, giving the room a festive and refreshing look. Not unfrequently, the worthy farmer is proud to

have the dresses of his daughters hung in conspicuous positions, in order that swains who call may see that the damsels are well provided with garments in case of a matrimonial alliance.

The cowhouses are generally an improvement on those usually seen in England and Scotland. The building is larger, and more space is allotted to each animal; while a clean wooden floor is ordinarily beneath the cattle. Little or no bedding is given. The level of the cowhouse is in most cases raised high enough to allow of a space beneath, into which the refuse is regularly swept through an opening in the floor.

Outside the buildings, one is apt to ask, But where is the farm? Look about you. Mountains hem us in on all sides; there is no room for fields as we know them at home; but grass grows luxuriously among the rocks, with occasionally a patch as large as an ordinary villa-garden. There, the farmer cuts a portion of his hay-crop, on which his horses and cattle are mainly dependent during the eight winter months. But his hay-field is yet wider spread. Glance upward some fifteen hundred feet, there, where an opening occurs in the dwarf-birch, and you will observe the diminished form of a man busy at work. That is the farmer, a thorough mountaineer, cutting the grass which grows on yonder narrow ledge of rock. He has been up since early morn, and will probably not descend till evening. Not a tuft of grass will be left ungathered; not a foot of level ground on that steep and rugged mountain side but will be visited, and its small crop carefully removed by the industrious bergsman. If he has a wide stretch of fjeld (hill-pasture or moorland) in his boundary, the farmer erects wooden sheds, in which he stores his hay till winter, when, by an ingenious contrivance, he has the whole rapidly and easily conveyed to the valley. A familiar object in a Norwegian glen is the strong steel wire which stretches from the foot to the summit of the mountain. Down this wire the bundles of hay are expeditiously sent without labor, and then carried on sledges to the steadings. Without such a method, many weary journeys would be necessary ere all the hay required for a long winter could be brought

down. It appears the Norwegian farmer borrowed the idea of this hay-telegraph from his brother hillsman of the Tyrol about eight years ago. The hay-crop is the product of natural grass, no seed being sown, nor any admixture of clover being used.

The cereals are generally oats and barley; these are planted wherever there is a likelihood of their growing. Small patches from twenty feet to as many yards square are common; while not unfrequently the corn-fields are but a name, for they meander like a stream in all directions among the huge boulders and bare rocky hillocks which compose so great a part of the surface of a farmland. The heads are usually very light, and their appearance would cause a painful smile on the face of a Western farmer. Still, the people cheerfully sow and thankfully reap their scanty harvest, contented if providence gives them sufficient for their few wants.

The method employed in drying the hay and corn crops is different from that which obtains in this country. In the former case, poles are erected on or near the patches, and between them ropes or long sticks are laid till a sort of six-barred railing is made. On these bars the hay is laid, and dried in a most effective manner. The corn, on the other hand, is tied in small bundles and impaled on poles placed at intervals in the fields. These poles are about nine feet high, and capable of holding ten sheaves each. The grain is thus elevated above the ground; and should a rain-storm set in before it can be conveyed to the granary, little harm results, for half an hour's wind and sunshine thoroughly dries the crop. In the great valley of Voss, the fields are more extensive than those just described. Indeed, a field of two to three acres can be seen on more than one farm near Tringe.

With regard to the potato crop, the same kind of miniature farming occurs, only "much more so," as Mark Twain would say. A seed is dropped here and there wherever a possibility exists of its taking root. In the Nørødal, the writer noticed potatoes growing on a boulder, where a soil of about eighteen inches had gathered or been placed. The "field" was a triangle, whose sides were each about twelve feet in length!

Turnips would appear to be outside the economy of a Norwegian farm. Though a wide area was visited, embracing Bergens-

Amt, Hardanger, and part of the Sogne district, not a bulb was visible; a curious feature, considering the importance of such a crop for winter food.

The portion of the farm given up to crop and fallow is styled the *in-marken*, or inside fields; between that and the fjeld are the *out-marken*. The latter are reserved, as a rule, for the cattle during winter; the hay being allowed to grow in the summer while the cows are at the *sæters* on the mountains. Manuring is not resorted to as a regular part of the routine; the fields are left from time to time for three or four years, by rotation, in grass.

The farmers themselves are worthy of more than the brief description which can be given here. A life of constant activity and mountain climbing has bred a class of men scarcely to be excelled. They are tall and strongly built, with no excess of flesh, for they are always in training. Their athletic frames are supplemented by good-humored, honest faces, always ready to break into a laugh. A uniform suit of pilot-cloth does not, however, enhance their appearance. One does not readily associate the Sunday clothes of a navvy with the Norwegian farmer. Their former dress, which some of the old men retain, is more becoming. And happily, we still find the true mountaineer's costume in some of the more secluded districts—a broad hat, short jacket of home-made cloth, ornate with bright buttons; leather knee-breeches; and heelless shoes of a soft tough hide. The never-absent knife hangs suggestively at the right side. Add limbs of large proportions, a frank face, a back as straight as a soldier's, and you see the typical fjeldsman. The farms of Sæbo and Skjøgadals will be familiar examples to the tourist.

In the summer months, female servants, or the daughters of the farmer, tend the cattle high up in the fjeld, living in *sæters* or cabins, where they prepare cheese and butter. This isolation of young women for three or four months each year is a peculiar feature, and one not calculated to meet with universal approval. Indeed, the evils which spring from such a domestic arrangement are as real as their probability is evident; and they form a distinct blot on the otherwise simple and moral life of the people.

Excepting for such luxuries as coffee, sugar, and tobacco, the farmer in Norway

can be independent of the outside world. His fields and stock give him food and clothing; while from the timber on his hillsides he builds his houses, and manufactures his furniture. There is no lack of plate in those little farmhouses; the hostess can muster quite a display of silver mugs, spoons, and drinking-cups. Some of the spoons are worthy of special notice, for the patterns are delicate and chaste. A favorite kind is that with the thin twisted handle. Any Sunday or fête-day, one may also observe the profusion with which the female population adorn themselves with silver and gold. The arrival of a steamer in some of the less frequented districts is enough to stimulate the wives and lasses to attire themselves in all their bright costume and fligree nicknacks. It is occasionally the fortune of a wanderer among the fjords and fjelds thus to witness these gathering of the women-folk. Many of the ornaments and plate find their way to shops in the larger towns, and also to hotel parlors, where they lie, tempting objects to the tourist matron and miss. On inquiring into the cause which led to the Norske women parting with their adornments, we were informed that it was generally done by intending emigrants.

There is no feudal principle in Norway. The land is held by its owner absolutely, without any tenure from the king or superior. Property thus requires no charter, and the owners have never been subject to military service as vassals. The facility with which property can be transferred is refreshing to one who contemplates the complicated and costly machinery of the law to be encountered in other countries. A stroke of the district judge's pen is sufficient under the simple laws of Norway.

On a death of a farmer, his children—sons

and daughters alike—have the property equally divided among them. Should the farm be insufficient for all their wants, an amicable arrangement is usually made, by which the surplus relinquish their shares on payment of a compensatory sum, and settle elsewhere, or emigrate. It might seem that this system of subdivision would ultimately result in impoverished holdings; but, as justly remarked by Mr. Samuel Laing in his *Diary*, the reason that such an issue is prevented lies in the fact that in Norway the land being held in full ownership, "its aggregation by the deaths of co-heirs and by the marriage of female heirs among the body of landowners, balances its subdivision by the equal succession of children."

There is no aristocracy in Norway, unless it be that of successful enterprise and labor. The farmer owns no superior, is uniformly polite and hospitable to all; while servility and obsequiousness are utterly foreign to his nature.

Sufficient has been given in this short sketch to enable the reader to form an idea of Norwegian farm and farmers. If it should occur to any one to inquire why it is that men toil year by year in a hard and constant struggle, where farming is a task of the utmost difficulty and bazard, we feel sure the reply, and only reply, is this, that the land they till is *their own*. They love it, for on it their fathers lived—many of them can trace their ancestors as far back as the grand old days of the vikings—and they, unless compelled by force of circumstances, are happy to reap and sow the same acres season after season. With all the forces of nature arrayed against them, these men can show that their small holdings feed them and their children; and make them the backbone, the strength, of *gamle Norge*.

AUNT PEDDIKER'S TAME RAT.

BY IONE L. JONES.

AUNT PEDDIKER was different from most people, and that was the reason Dick liked her. Dick, that scamp of a nephew, who set his poor mother's nerves on edge with his noise and pranks, frightened his two timid, lady-like sisters almost out of their wits, and succeeded in convincing his quiet, dignified father that rest was to be found in

the house only when his son was out of it. Aunt Peddiker, who was particularly fond of boys, thoroughly understood Dick, and appreciated him accordingly. In return for this genuine sympathy, her promising nephew voted her a *brick*. In just the daintiest cottage imaginable Aunt Peddiker lived, happy and contented. You would

scarcely believe it, but this little brown-haired aunty had been a veritable hoyden in her day; and when naughty Dick would relate, with much gust, his last joke on the girls, Aunt Peddiker generally matched it with one of her own in by-gone days; and the two congenial spirits would celebrate the fun with a pitcher of lemonade and a huge dish of popcorn. Aunt Peddiker was not afraid of anything in the shape of bird, beast or insect. She had owned whole families of white mice, quantities of furry caterpillars, a Mexican toad, and a tame crow, beside many other strange pets. The mice met their fate one night when the door of their house was left unbolted, and a black cat welcomed them to the outside world. The caterpillars turned into gaudy butterflies, and were pinned by their dry little wings to the lace curtains, and rested in brilliant splendor on the crystallized grasses on the mantle. Some near-sighted visitor stepped on poor Mr. Toad, and old black Jo choked to death with a piece of meat.

"Dear old fellow—he was so full of tricks," sighed Aunt Peddiker; "what shall we get next, Dick?"

Dick suggested a pair of rabbits, canaries, or a pug dog, and went home leaving his good aunt to consider the matter, and to make a choice.

The next morning the little woman was too busy to think of anything in the shape of a pet. A man was coming to clean the back shed. Gentle spring had arrived, and cleaning house time was near at hand.

"What have you there, Thomas?" called Aunt Peddiker from the kitchen, as she noticed the man gazing intently at something behind a barrel.

"Oh, mum, a family of young rats, drat the critters!"

"Wait; let me see them," answered the lady.

"I'll dhrown 'em fur yees, mum," kindly suggested Thomas.

"No," said Aunt Peddiker; "I will see to them myself." And into the house she went with five baby rats, their eyes not yet open.

Dick was wild with delight when he saw them, and immediately relieved his Aunt of two of them. Alas, poor Dick! The next morning they were both dead. The three remaining orphans were taught to lick the

warm milk from their mistress's fingers, and then they learned to lap it from a dish; and were well and thriving, when two of them were taken with cramps, and expired. Maria, the sole surviving individual, grew to be a smart, active rat, tame, gentle, and very interesting to her mistress.

One evening, as Aunt Peddiker sat alone knitting, while Maria scampered gayly about the room, the door-bell rang. The frisky pet was hastily tucked in her cage, and Aunt Peddiker hastened to the door. A pink flush stole into her cheeks, as she welcomed Deacon Trim. The worthy man had walked home from church with her several times, and now he had really come to make a call. Aunt Peddiker's heart gave a nervous little flutter. She could not help it, to save her life. She thanked her stars Dick wasn't there. The little auntie had been engaged to be married years ago. Her sailor boy lover was lost at sea; and she had always remained faithful to his memory. That time seemed very far away now as she sat by her bright, cheery fire, and entertained the smiling Deacon; and thought how silly she was to even feel pleased at his evident admiration.

After Maria had become somewhat accustomed to the deep tones of the Deacon, she pushed open the half-clasped door, and quietly descended from her cage, which stood on the top shelf of the wall-rack, and re-commenced her playful gambols over the floor. When she came within sight of the astonished man of the church he started back, nearly upsetting his chair, and screamed at the top of his lungs:—

"Hil there's a rat!"

Madly grasping his cane as a weapon of defence, he retreated to the other side of the room.

"Oh, it is only Maria," said Aunt Peddiker, in her quietest tones, as a mischievous twinkle came into her bright eyes.

The good deacon resumed his chair, and tried by degrees to calm himself, starting visibly now and then, when Maria approached too near for comfort, and continuing to hold his cane in his hand. Aunt Peddiker was never so fascinating in all her life; and between the wit and vivacity of the rosy-cheeked dame, and his mortal fear of the frisky Maria, the Deacon was nearly beside himself with excitement. It was with the most genuine sense of relief that he watched the unique pet climb up to her cage, and

pop in out of sight. Aunt Peldiker chatted on in her sprightliest manner, and Maria stretched her neck to take one final peep at the pair below before composing her rat-ship to sleep and quiet dreams. Dear me! what was it that looked so queer down there? Curiosity got the better of Maria. She emerged from her warn nest, and looked again, sniffing the air, and discreetly measuring the distance with her keen, black eyes. She could endure the suspense no longer. Straightening out her long, silky tail, she gathered herself up for a spring and the next instant landed plump and hard on the unsuspecting Deacon's well-smoothed auburn wig. With one prolonged yell of fright, and a fierce little word that was not wont to escape his lips under any ordinary circumstances, the trembling Deacon landed in the middle of the room. The enticing auburn wig hung jauntily on his left shoulder.

Maria was nowhere to be seen. Aunt Peddiker, failing to stifle her suppressed mirth by stuffing her handkerchief into her mouth, threw herself back into her chair

and laughed until the tears streamed down her plump cheeks. She did not accompany her panting visitor to the door, for raising her face from her handkerchief after a hysterical fit of coughing, she discovered the disgusted Deacon had vanished from sight, wig and all.

Poor Maria! where was she? Aunt Peddiker hunted and called in vain until she spied just the tip of a soft gray nose peeping out from under the yellow sofa cushion on the lounge. When she raised it up, there crouched Maria; her ears still trembling and the hair standing straight on her back, too frightened to squeak.

The Deacon did not call again; and Dick noticed, with a sense of exultation, that he did not escort the little aunty from church the next Sunday evening.

"Aunt Peddiker is too good to get married," thought Dick; "and how it would spoil all our larks!"

The little woman kept this one secret all to herself, and Dick never knew that Aunt Peddiker's tame rat had utterly routed the Deacon from the premises.

OUR YOUNG FOLKS' STORY-TELLER.

LORD HIGH HASTY PUDDING.

A CHRISTMAS STORY.

BY ELIZABETH BIGELOW.

"IT would be flyin' in the face of Providence to have Christmas cookin's-up and goin's-on with your Aunt Joseph mebbe dyin' sick, and your grandpa and grandma smashed up on the railroad goin' to see her, and your grandpa's back hurt so he'll mebbe have a spine in it that he'll carry to his grave, as I've known folks to. No, there won't be any Christmas doin's in this house!"

Barb'r' Ann wrinkled her white eyebrows and thrust her knitting-needle through her back hair, and these acts always signified that there was no more to be said. Barb'r' Ann was the housekeeper, and when grandma was absent her word was law.

No Christmas! The children looked at

each other in blank dismay, and then the younger ones, Rebekah and young Tom, and even little Peleg, the baby, looked at Reuben 'Rastus. They always looked at Reuben 'Rastus when a difficulty arose. He was, as everyone knew, the "cutest" boy in Parkinsville. If crooked things could be made straight, he was the one to find the way; if he got into mischief he could almost always get out without being caught; and no matter whom he traded with, he was sure to get the best of the bargain. Eli, his grandfather's hired man, got him to trade knives for him, and Caddy Maria, the hired girl, (Barb'r' Ann's niece), always thought the tin-peddler cheated her unless Reuben 'Rastus was on hand to keep him straight.

It was Reuben 'Rastus' proud boast that no one had ever cheated him out of anything in his life. What was he going to do about it, the children wondered, now that Barb'r' Ann proposed to cheat them out of a Christmas? Reuben 'Rastus' could convince grandpa that riding a bicycle was far better than hoeing corn to develop a boy's muscles; and he could make grandma think that plum-preserve was more likely to cure a cold than hemlock tea; he could even persuade the schoolmaster that a whole holiday was absolutely necessary to prevent the squirrels from getting all the nuts; but when it came to Barb'r' Ann, his powers of argument and persuasion were unavailing. She held boys in very slight esteem. Her own boy, whom she had brought with her when she came, a widow, to live with the Parkins family, had taken very young to evil courses, and run away, and had, as the children had heard people say, broken Barb'r' Ann's heart. Grandma had bidden them be very kind to Barb'r' Ann, and never mind when she was cross, on that account. Reuben 'Rastus', for his part, never wondered that Billy Ann, as the children called Barb'r' Ann's son, had run away, although he could remember when Barb'r' Ann was not quite so grim as she was now, and did not always want to have hasty-pudding for supper Sunday nights, which was the very loneliest thing in the world. Billy Ann was a good fellow, as Reuben 'Rastus' remembered him, and had taken him fishing, and taught him to set woodchuck traps, and to skate, and had never seemed to think him a very little boy, as people were apt to; and when, in dark and stormy nights, Barb'r' Ann would leave a light burning in her window until daylight, Reuben 'Rastus' felt very bad, and wished that Billy Ann would come back. But he never did. Reuben 'Rastus' wondered if Barb'r' Ann never thought that perhaps her grimness and hasty-pudding suppers had driven him away. He was sure he should run away if her reign lasted long. She was always gloomier than usual at holiday times, and Rebekah, as well as Reuben 'Rastus', was of the opinion that she really enjoyed having an excuse for not keeping Christmas.

"There won't be no Christmas tree, nor no plum-pudding," continued Barb'r' Ann. "The appropriate thing we can have to eat is hasty-pudding."

A hasty-pudding Christmas! They all looked at Reuben 'Rastus', but Reuben 'Rastus' was stricken dumb. He might be master of any ordinary situation, but with such a prospect as this staring him in the face it was no wonder that his wits deserted him. He went and sat on the chopping-block and whittled a tough pine knot all into little bits without gaining any inspiration. And he snubbed Rebekah when she asked him what they *should* do, and called young Tom a cry-baby.

Rebekah tried to bring Barb'r' Ann to a better mind by hinting at presents that were in store for her; but she said, tartly, that she "hoped she had more feelin' than to be thinkin' of presents in these afflictin' times, and there wa'n't nothin' anybody could give her that she would so much as look at."

Reuben 'Rastus' went to bed that night in a very depressed state of mind, and still vainly racking his brains for some way to have a real Christmas in spite of Barb'r' Ann.

He might telegraph their troubles to grandma, but he was afraid that would be selfish, since she was having so much anxiety; and if Barb'r' Ann were forced to make Christmas preparations in a hasty-pudding frame of mind, things might not be very pleasant.

Hark! what a queer noise was that! Stir—stir—bubble—bubble! for all the world as if Barb'r' Ann were making hasty-pudding; and then a little rustle—rustle. Reuben 'Rastus' sprang up in bed, and in the bright moonlight that filled the room he saw a very queer little man sitting on the foot-board.

His cloak, which had a great many little capes, seemed to be made of faded green silk; his hair and beard were almost as white as Santa Claus', but instead of being crisp and curly like his, they were long and straight and silky. His face was shaped like a spoon—indeed, it immediately reminded Reuben 'Rastus' of Barb'r' Ann's large wooden spoon—and its length gave him a serious and even melancholy appearance; but when he smiled, which he did with great affability on meeting Reuben 'Rastus' eye, disclosing two wide rows of even teeth, he looked for the moment quite jolly.

Reuben 'Rastus' rubbed his eyes to be sure that he was awake, and pinched him-

self to see whether he were really Reuben 'Rastus.

"Why don't you say something? No need of ceremony between old acquaintances like you and me," said the little man.

"I'm sure I haven't the honor," said Reuben 'Rastus, politely, although he couldn't help stammering.

"You don't mean to say you don't know me, and are afraid of me, when you have been calling me names and heaping scorn on me all your life? But you needn't apologize; I'm not one to bear malice. But I'll tell you my real name now, and perhaps you won't forget it. I am Lord High Hasty Pudding."

"Dear me! I shouldn't have supposed you would look so well," said Reuben 'Rastus, before he thought.

"Look so well! My looks are the very poorest part of me. I know I'm homely, but I have a heart of gold. The good I do—but there! I'm not the one to speak of it."

"I didn't mean that you were not nice," said Reuben 'Rastus, hastily, fearing a lecture, like his grandfather's, on the great benefits of the food he despised. "But isn't it a pity that dry codfish always goes with you? and why does Barb'r' Ann always have you on Sundays and rainy afternoons, when it's lonesome anyway?"

"I'm coming around at Christmas this year. Will that suit you?" said the little man.

"Oh, dear! please don't!" cried Reuben 'Rastus. "You must see yourself that you're not—not appropriate at Christmas."

"You want Lord High Everything Else then, do you?" said the little man, with a laugh.

And Reuben 'Rastus wondered where he had seen the Mikado, to which his Aunt Kate had taken him on his last visit to the city.

"But there are people, even children, right here in Parkinsville, who will be glad enough to see me at Christmas," continued the little man, seriously. "There are houses where there won't be so much as a sniff of turkey or plum-pudding, and where they don't even know how a Christmas-tree looks. The brick-yard closed early this year, and men are out of work."

"Grandpa looks after them," said Reuben 'Rastus, with a little uneasy feeling at his heart or his conscience; he didn't know which and I don't, but all the children knew,

as well as they knew Reuben 'Rastus was "smart," that he was not generous.

"Some of them are too proud to let anybody know how poor they are. There are the new French people from Canada; they are strangers; the Tribouchets with seven children, and Leo the dog; and the Le Blancs with three pale little girls, and Mousseline the cat; they will be glad of hasty-pudding, even on Christmas Eve. Leo is prejudiced, like you; I would like to give him a bone; he is so thin that one can almost see through him. Mousseline, the Le Blanc cat, is more sensible—if there is milk to put in the pudding."

Reuben 'Rastus was very fond of animals, and disliked to hear of their being hungry, but he didn't think much of a cat that would eat hasty-pudding.

"If you'll keep away, I'll look after those people and give them a Christmas," said Reuben 'Rastus. "I've a little money that I can do as I please with, and a whole flock of turkeys and chickens that I raised myself!"

"You must be careful how you do it, for they're proud," said the little man. "But if you really will, I can find other places where I'm needed."

"Way off, if you please! Lapland, where they have to eat blubber," said Reuben 'Rastus, recalling his geography, "or the Cannibal Islands."

Afterwards he was afraid he had suggested something that was not quite polite in mentioning the latter place, but while he was thinking how he should apologize, there came the rustling sound again, and a stir-stir and a babble-babble, and the little man was gone, and the tardy winter sunlight was coming in at the window! Reuben 'Rastus looked into every corner, but there was no Lord High Hasty Pudding; the only thing that bore any resemblance to him, was a great ear of corn, the largest of the harvest, which Reuben 'Rastus had hung over his mirror, as a trophy, because it had grown in his own corn-patch. It's husks rustled like Lord High Hasty Pudding's cloak.

"I'm afraid I've got into trouble, promising to give other people a merry Christmas when I can't get one for myself!" thought Reuben 'Rastus. But suddenly a bright idea struck him; he thought it was such a bright idea that he went down-stairs three stairs at a time, and uttered the Gibway war-whoop (which was especially trying to

Barb'r' Ann's nerves) in the hall. And the very first words he heard Barb'r' Ann say were these:—

"Eli went and put that last Injin meal that he brought from the mill down cellar, because the granary door stuck, and forgot it and left it there, and it's all mouldy, and spoilt! Some folks is so shif'less! And the miller's folks have visitors, and we can't get any corn ground till after Christmas, and there ain't even meal enough to feed the turkeys! I declare I never saw the time before when there wa'n't a mite of meal in the house!"

Lord High Hasty Pudding was keeping his word! Reuben 'Rastus wasn't going to believe it was all a dream, after that!

He took Rebekah aside and confided his plan to her, and Rebekah thought it was a beautiful plan, and her faith in Reuben 'Rastus revived.

It wasn't going to be in the least like any Christmas she ever heard of, but that she said was all the better. If only they could manage it without letting Barb'r' Ann find out! She wore soft slippers, and, when she was in a doleful mood, her apron over her head,—and Rebekah cherished a suspicion that Barb'r' Ann's apron was like the Invisible Prince's cap,—before you heard a sound she was right upon you.

Caddy Maria had to be taken into their confidence, because her help was indispensable; she was a very obliging girl, and, besides, she had her own personal objections to Barb'r' Ann's dolefulness; and she showed them a letter from their grandmother in which she said "be sure that the children have a merry Christmas as they can under the circumstances." Who cared for Barb'r' Ann's cross looks, after that?

Caddy Maria had to make all her preparations at her married sister Elizabeth Ellen's, and even then Barb'r' Ann went about sniffing, and saying she smelled sweet marjoram and summer savory as sure as she was a living woman, and if somebody hadn't been chopping raisins and citron she must be a-dreamin'."

Caddy Maria said, demurely, that she "thought you always could kind of smell Christmas even if there didn't seem to be any round."

Eli helped, too, with many a sly chuckle at getting the better of Barb'r' Ann, who was very much in the habit of getting the

better of him. The plumpest of turkeys and chickens of Reuben 'Rastus' own flock turned their toes up silently to the stars, and looked complacent over their own fatness and their taking off in so good a cause.

It did not storm. They had all studied "probabilities" with great anxiety, because a storm would spoil everything, and they had not been found out, although Barb'r' Ann was in one of the moods in which she wore her apron over her head all the time, and—poor Barb'r' Ann!—kept the candle burning in her window every night.

And the day before Christmas the seven Tribouchets, gaunt and hungry and friendless little strangers in a strange land, and the three little Le Blancs whose father was a drunkard and whose mother was dying of consumption, almost lost their wits with amazement and delight upon receiving communications like this:—

"Merry Christmas! Meet me at the brick-yards at 7 P. M. *sharp*.

SANTA CLAUS."

In postscript, the Tribouchets were invited to bring Leo their dog, and the Le Blancs to bring Mousseline their cat. For Reuben 'Rastus remembered everything that Lord High Hasty Pudding had said.

The older Tribouchets, with their sad experience of the world, thought someone must be playing them a trick, and Babette Le Blanc was afraid it was so, because who ever heard of Santa Claus remembering a cat?

The brick-yards were half a mile away from the Parkins' farmhouse, in a somewhat lonely place. They were very busy places, and furnished employment to a great many men for seven or eight months in the year. Grandpa Parkins owned them, and the children found them very fascinating places. All of Rebekah's dolls set up housekeeping with brick-moulds for cupboards, and preferred them to anything that the finest toy shop could furnish, and young Tom, who was lame, spent much of his time there modelling in clay, and developing, all his family thought, remarkable genius.

But at this time of year the brick-yards were deserted and lonely. The Tribouchets and the Le Blancs thought it the very queerest of all places to find Santa Claus. When the time came they were really afraid to go, until the sight of a bonfire, blazing gaily just outside the yards, reassured them.

The yards were lighted also by pitch-pine torches, and the hungry children became aware of such savory odors as certainly were never found in a brick-yard before. All the kilns had fires under them, and where bricks were usually burned were now roasting turkeys and chickens, apples and potatoes, and a great pudding, which Caddy Maria, who had made it, and was now superintending the baking, declared to be the queen of all Christmas puddings!

Eli was continually stuffing wood into the little arches, declaring that it was "the cur'usest kiln of bricks ever he helped to burn," and young Tom was popping corn.

The visitors shrank back, and felt as if they were intruding, until they caught sight of Santa Claus. There he was, as broad as he was long, with a pack on his back, a very rosy-cheeked mask on, and long curling hair that was as white as flour could make it (it was really his great grandfather's old black wig that Reuben 'Rastus had found in the attic), and he gave them a welcome that made them feel at once that they belonged there, and it was all right, though it was so queerly delightful. Leo barked joyously at the savory odors to which he was so unaccustomed, but Mousseline, the cat, disturbed the harmony of the occasion by making her back into a sharp ridge and her tail as large as all the rest of her, and making a fierce attack upon Leo, who regarded her with dignified disdain. And Mousseline was carried home in disgrace under Babette Le Blanc's shawl.

"You had better bring some baskets when you come back!" Santa Claus called after her.

"We were going to have a Christmas tree, only it was so cold!" said Rebekah.

It was bitterly cold; keen wind blew up from the river and pierced through and through the thin garments of Santa Claus' guests, but they were scarcely conscious of it, in their happy excitement, being, indeed, quite unaccustomed to feeling warm. Young Tom's hands, however, grew numb as he held the corn-popper, and Rebekah was obliged to go often and dance around the bon-fire to keep from freezing.

And so the Christmas dinner, in spite of Eli's carefully arranged table of logs, and Caddy Maria's efforts to serve everything with the greatest propriety, was a very hasty affair, and characterized by liveliness rather than strict decorum, although the guests were all remarkably well-behaved, even

down to Leo, who waited with patient dignity for his share of good things; and before the dessert was reached one of the little Tribouchets was sent home to get all the baskets he could lay his hands on. How the guests' eyes shone while those baskets were being filled! And how they talked of this one and that one at home who would be made happy! Babette Le Blanc remembered even the bad Mousseline, and saved tidbits for her.

"I never knew before," said Reuben 'Rastus, in confidence to young Tom, "how good it would make a fellow feel to give things away!" And he was very glad that he had met Lord High Hasty Pudding.

When Santa Claus' pack was opened what a scene it was! It was a very well filled pack for one so hastily prepared. There was warm clothing in it that the children had outgrown, and Grandma had laid aside to give away—mittens and jackets, comforters and dresses, and a great many toys of which the children had tired, besides a whole box-full that had been sent to them that very day; they all wished to give them away when they heard Reuben 'Rastus' plan. Little Toine Tribouchet, with a brand new pair of skates, forgot that he was ever cold or hungry; and what were the troubles of life to little Lizette Le Blanc who had a French doll?

The jolly old moon and the blinking stars, that must have looked down on many a queer Christmas-keeping, had probably never seen one in a brick-yard before, since Bethlehem's Babe brought Christmas into the world; but since his poor were remembered, and sad hearts made glad, they must have seen that it was a real Christmas.

Little Lizette Le Blanc had danced up to the bonfire for the fifth time, to be sure whether her doll's eyes were blue or brown, and she came flying back in a fright.

"There's a man there, and he's fallen down right on his face beside the fire, with his hands stretched out so!" she cried.

"He has been drinking," said Babette Le Blanc, who was sadly experienced, as they all crowded around him.

"No, he hasn't; he's either sick or frozen," said Eli, raising his head. "Look here, children! bless my soul if it ain't!"

"Billy Ann!" exclaimed Reuben 'Rastus.

"They rubbed him, and poured hot coffee down his throat, and he soon revived.

"If I hadn't got here just as I did, I

guess another minute or two would have been too late for me," he said, with a shiver. "You didn't think I'd been drinking, Eli? I've been steady for more'n a year—you'll tell my mother that, if I don't live to see her, won't you? I've been in the hospital sick with a fever, and I came out before I was strong enough. I wanted to get to mother by Christmas. I knew she'd be looking for me and thinking of me then. And I had to walk most of the way because I hadn't money to pay my fare. The cold kind of crept over me before I knew it, and the weakness. I was just giving up when I saw the fire, and managed to crawl to it."

Billy Ann had come home! Oh, what would his mother say? This was the very best of the Christmas!

The Tribouchets and the Le Blancs departed with full baskets and joyful hearts, and Eli half led half carried Billy Ann home to his mother.

Barb'r' Ann had given Caddy Maria permission to spend the evening out, but what could she think had become of them? the children wondered. How many times must she have rung the bell for supper!—she must have had rye pudding, since there was no Indian meal! There was the candle burning in her window for Billy—who was really coming home! Reuben 'Rastus had intended to sneak in through the wood-shed, on account of his Santa Claus dress, but now he walked boldly up to the door and knocked.

"I'm Santa Claus and I've brought you a present!" he said, as Barb'r' Ann opened

the door, and before she had time to scowl, he stepped aside and let her see her son.

Barb'r' Ann fell down on her grim old knees, and sobbed, and hugged her boy.

"I'm a wicked old woman afflictin' others on account of my troubles," she said. "Why couldn't I believe that everything bein' in the good Lord's hands must come out all right sometime? And to think He's sent a Christmas to me that wouldn't let them precious children have a mite of any! And your grandmother has telegraphed that your Aunt Joseph is better, and they're coming home to-morrow, and she hopes to find a very merry Christmas—and that *did* work me up! and oh, my boy, is it really you?"

When she heard about the brick-yard festivities and the bonfire that saved Billy's life, Barb'r' Ann was even more overcome, and begged the children's forgiveness until they were quite embarrassed.

Billy is a foreman in the brick-yard, now, and he and his mother live in a little house of their own. Caddy Maria has been promoted to the position of housekeeper at the farm, so there is no fear that they will ever again be threatened with a hasty-pudding Christmas.

Reuben 'Rastus told his grandmother about Lord High Hasty Pudding. She thought that the wind might have rustled the husks of the great ear of corn over his mirror, and put strange fancies into his dreams.

But, although Lord High Hasty Pudding has never come to sit upon his foot-board again, Reuben 'Rastus has his own opinion.

OUR PRINCESS.

OUR little, calm-eyed, queenly maid—
We see upon her baby face
Her name's significance displayed
In looks of dignity and grace.
With eyes that seem to read one through,
Beneath a fringe of golden hue,
With broad white brow and placid mien,
She is, indeed, our fireside queen.

And still the frequent, close caress,
The wealth of home-love, fond and true,
Or guests' admiring tenderness,—
She takes them simply as her due,
And seems to know, from insight clear,
The clasp and kiss of friend sincere;
So early do these pure hearts learn
Love's precious value to discern.

A mother's love would seek to know
What life before her darling lies,
What grace these pretty ways foreshow,
What truth awaits those earnest eyes.
Still many winsome wiles repay
The cares and tasks of every day,
Since Sara came our home to bless,
Our Christmas guest, our dear princess.

To Him who made her pure and fair
Her coming years we will commend,
Trusting her ways shall be His care
When mother's love with life shall end.
For 'tis in vain we strive to look
Within the future's close-shut book,
To learn if life or gloom be shed
Upon the path our child must tread.

THE HOUSEKEEPER.

MILAN CAKE.—Half a pound of sifted flour, a quarter of a pound of butter, six ounces of sugar, two tablespoonfuls of thick, sour cream, and one egg. Make a paste of these ingredients, roll it out and cut it into diamond shaped pieces; glaze with egg, and bake in a hot oven; when cold place a bit of jam or jelly in the centre of each and serve.

APPLE CUSTARD.—Pare and core the apples; stew in a little water until tender; pour over them a custard made in the usual manner, and bake until the custard is done.

RICE GEMS.—One cupful of boiled rice, one egg, one cupful of milk, one saltspoonful of salt, one cupful of flour, one teaspoonful of baking-powder; bake in hot gem pans well buttered.

SCALLOPED CODFISH.—Mix together two teacups of mashed potatoes, one and one-half teacups of cold boiled codfish, two and one-half teacups of milk, one-half egg, and one-quarter of a teacup of butter; bake a light brown.

TONGUE TOAST.—Make some slices of toast, not very thick, browned evenly all over on both sides, and minus crust; butter it slightly; grate with a large grater a liberal supply of cold tongue, and spread it thickly over the toast; lay the slices side by side on a large dish. Serve at breakfast, luncheon, or supper.

MINUTE PUDDING.—Put over the fire, in a well-buttered kettle, two tablespoons of water and about two quarts of milk. Have ready a pan of sifted flour; when the milk begins to rise in the kettle, briskly stir in the flour till about as thick as corn mush. Serve with cream and sugar.

CHICKEN SALAD.—Cook one chicken until tender, and chop into dice. Chop fine one head of cabbage and five cold hard-boiled eggs; mix and season with salt, pepper, and mustard. Instead of cabbage, equal parts of celery and lettuce are used when they can be procured, and are preferable. Mix the chicken and vegetable lightly with a fork, garnish with the rings of the white of eggs, and pour over a salad dressing.

OMELET.—Beat the whites and yolks of eight eggs separately until light, then beat together, and add one tablespoonful of cream; put a piece of butter the size of an egg in a frying-pan, and when boiling hot pour in the omelet; shake slowly till it begins to stiffen, then let it brown; fold double and serve hot.

VEGETABLE SOUP.—Four onions, three turnips, four carrots, one small head of cabbage, one pint of butter beans, and a bunch of sweet herbs; boil until done; add a quart of soup stock; take two tablespoonfuls of butter and one of flour; beat to a cream; pepper and salt to taste; add a spoonful of sugar. Serve with fried bread chips.

PEANUT CANDY.—Remove the shells and brown skins from the nuts; then boil two cups of molasses, one cup of brown sugar, a piece of butter the size of a small egg, and a tablespoonful of vinegar; boil until nearly brittle; then place the peanuts in a buttered pan, pour the candy over them, and cut into squares or bars.

POTATOES WITH CREAM.—Boil, peel and slice the potatoes; put a good piece of butter in stew-pan, adding a spoonful of flour, salt, pepper, or a little grated nutmeg, some parsley and cives chopped finely, and mix the whole together; then add a glass of cream; set the sauce over the fire, and stir it until it boils; then put in the sliced potatoes; boil up and serve very hot.

GINGER POUND CAKE.—Six cups of flour, two cups each of butter, brown sugar and molasses, eight eggs, tablespoonful each of cinnamon, ginger and soda, and two nutmegs; dissolve the soda in a cup of sour milk. In baking take particular pains not to let the cake scorch, for gingerbread is of all cakes the easiest to burn. Line the pans with greased paper, and put a brown paper over the top to prevent the crust forming too quickly.

BROWN BETTY.—Cut into thin slices several large apples; have ready a buttered pudding-dish; put into this a layer of grated bread crumbs, then a layer of sliced apples; over these sprinkle sugar, and so on alternately, bread, apples, sugar, until the pudding-dish is full, letting the top layer be of bread-crumbs; on this place three large lumps of butter; put in oven and bake brown. Serve hot with butter and sugar sauce.

CARROT SOUP.—Wash and scrape one good sized carrot, and cut in thin slices; cook the carrot, with one onion sliced, in boiling salted water until tender; then rub them through a squash-strainer; add a quart of milk, one teaspoonful of sugar, one-half teaspoonful of salt, a little white pepper, a dessertspoonful of Worcestershire sauce, a tablespoonful of butter, and let all boil up once; serve immediately with toasted cracker.

HOME TOPICS.

CROUP.—There are various remedies for this enemy in the nursery. As in other diseases, prevention is better than cure. Children liable to croup should not play out of doors after three o'clock in the afternoon. If a woollen shawl is closely pinned around the neck of the patient when the first symptoms of croup appear the attack may be diminished in power. The child struggling for breath naturally throws its arms out of bed to breathe through its pores, and thus takes more cold, and increases its trouble. Bichromate of potassa in minute doses—as much as will rest on the point of a penknife—given every half-hour till relief is obtained, is the best remedy we have ever tried. Mustard plasters on the ankles, wrists and chest, will draw the blood from the throat and relieve it; cloths wrung from hot soda water, placed about the chest and throat and covered with flannel, give relief. A teaspoonful of alum, pulverized and mixed with twice its quantity of sugar, to make it palatable, will give almost instant help. Another remedy is the following: Take equal parts of soda or saleratus and syrup or molasses; mix and give a teaspoonful for a child two years old, larger doses for older children, smaller for nursing babies. Repeat the doses at short intervals until the phlegm is all thrown up, and upon the recurrence of the symptoms. Or grate a raw onion, strain out the juice, and to two parts of the juice put one part castor oil; keep it well corked in a bottle, shake well, give one teaspoonful once in two or three hours. Or take two parts sweet lard and six parts pulverized sugar, mix thoroughly, and give a teaspoonful every fifteen minutes till relief is obtained. Among the many remedies given we hope that one or more may be available to every mother who needs aid in this matter.

OLD FOWLS.—"Buyers of game or poultry who find themselves in possession of a mature bird instead of the young one they desired, may make a most acceptable dish by putting the fowl in a large vessel with a tight cover, and steaming it until it is thoroughly tender. It should be made ready for the dressing before the steaming process, and when done stuffed immediately, covered with the very thinnest possible slices of salt pork, and baked until brown in a very hot oven. The water in the steaming vessel must be saved for the gravy and basting." Some reader may cry "chestnuts," on reading the above, because similar paragraphs travel through the press every winter and spring, but chickens cooked this way are so delicious, if properly done, that housekeepers cannot be too often reminded of the method. Geese, turkeys, and

ducks of ripe age are equally amenable to the tendering influence of the steam, and if the oven into which they are placed as the second part of the process is very hot they will crisp beautifully upon the outside and look almost as agreeable as they taste.

CLEANING CLOTHES.—To remove grease spots from clothes, take a basin of clear cold water and pour in enough liquid ammonia to make the water very soft—twenty or twenty-five drops. Then take a piece of cotton flannel and soak in the water; rub the spot briskly until the grease disappears, which it will do in a few minutes. Ammonia should never be used in full strength, as it eats into the cloth and does not remove the spots as well as when diluted. To remove the shiny look from black coat collars, seams and elbows, sponge in the same solution if the nap is not rubbed off. If the whole coat needs cleaning, strong black coffee in which a few drops of ammonia have been poured should be used. With a little patience and some work a much-soiled coat can be made to look almost as good as new. Men's light clothes, if sponged in ammonia water, will look much better than if washed, and will not shrink. Silk should never be washed. If grease spots get on it the best way to remove them is by placing a piece of common brown paper, the sort used by butchers is the best, under the silk and several pieces of paper over the spot, then pressing with a moderately heated iron. If the spot does not come out at once, keep putting in fresh pieces of the paper until it does. Chloroform will take spots out of the most delicate silk without leaving a trace behind. It must be applied very quickly, as it evaporates instantly. Black cashmere, merino and nun's veiling can be restored to much of their original lustre, when soiled and faded, if ripped apart and washed in a good soap-suds, then rinsed in clear water into which a great deal of blueing has been poured. Put so much blueing in the water as to make it look black. If the goods are very much faded, let them remain in this water over night. Press with a warm iron when slightly damp.

STOCK FOR SOUP.—Stock enough to last a family of five for one week can be made of five pounds of beef (leg is the best) and two pounds of veal. Cover it with cold water and let it remain for at least half an hour before putting it on the fire. Place it on some part of the range where it will simmer slowly from eight to ten hours, or until the meat is boiled into shreds. Strain it into your stock pot, and when it becomes cold remove the grease, cover the pot tightly, and set in some cold place. Any soup is possible to you now.

CURIOUS AND OTHER MATTERS.

CHRISTMAS WEATHER PROVERBS AND SAYINGS.

As Christmas Day is near at hand, old sayings and weather proverbs in reference to that day will be of interest.

"A light Christmas, a heavy sheaf."

"The shepherd would rather see his wife enter the stable on Christmas Day than the sun" (*German*).

"If the sun shines through the apple-tree on Christmas Day, there will be an abundant crop the following year."

"If ice will bear a man before Christmas, it will not bear a mouse afterward" (*English*).

"If Christmas finds a bridge, he'll break it; if he finds none, he'll make one."

"A warm Christmas, a cold Easter; a green Christmas, a white Easter."

"If Christmas Day on Thursday be,
A windy weather you will see;
Windy weather in each week,
And hard tempests, strong and thick.
The summer shall be good and dry,
Corn and beets shall multiply;
That year is good lands for to till;
Kings and princes shall die by skill.
If a child that day born should be,
It shall happen right well for thee;
Of deeds he shall be good and able,
Wise of speech and reasonable.
Whoso that day goes thieving about,
He shall be punished without doubt.
And if sickness that day betide,
It shall quickly from thee glide."

—*Harleian MS.*

"Easter in snow, Christmas in mud; Christmas in snow, Easter in mud."

"If ducks do slide at Hallowtide,
At Christmas Day they'll swim;
If ducks do swim at Hallowtide,
At Christmas Day they'll slide."

"If it snows on Christmas night, we expect a good hop crop next year."

"If at Christmas ice hangs on the willow, clover may be cut at Easter."

YULE-TIDE.—The yule-log is of ancient origin, and is undoubtedly a relic handed down to us from the Scandinavians, who were accustomed at their winter festivities to burn, amid pomp and splendor, bonfires to their god Thor. With less pomp and show the burning of the yule-log has been maintained as a Christmas Eve custom. We imagine it was not unlike the social old black log of more modern time, but now a relic of the past. The yule-log was drawn from the woods with great rejoicing, and every

passer made obeisance to it as the emblem of welcome and cheer. At the close of the festivities the partially burned log was carried to the cellar until the next anniversary, when it was used to light the new log. It was a popular notion that if the partly burned log were in the cellar the house was secure from fire. It was considered a bad omen if a squint-eyed person entered the house while the log was burning. As an attendant upon the yule log was the yule or Christmas candle, which was a candle of magnificent proportion, that was placed upon the festive board, and shed its joy-giving light throughout the house. The lighting of the yule-log was the commencing of all manner of sports and games.

INSANITY AMONG ANTS.—A naturalist in Nicaragua, says Don Francisco Velasques, informed him, in 1870, that he had a powder which made the ants mad, so that they bit and destroyed each other. "He gave me a little of it, and it proved to be corrosive sublimate. I made several trials of it, and found it most efficacious in turning a large column of ants. A little of it sprinkled across their paths in dry weather has a most surprising effect. As soon as one of the ants touches the white powder, it commences to run about wildly, and to attack any other ant it comes across. In a couple of hours, round balls of the ants will be found biting each other, and numerous individuals will be seen bitten completely in two, while others have lost some of their legs or antennæ. News of the commotion is carried to the formicarium, and huge fellows, measuring three-quarters of an inch in length, that only come out of the nest during a migration or an attack on the nest of one of the working columns, are seen sailing down with a determined air, as if they would soon right matters. As soon, however, as they have touched the sublimate, all their stateliness leaves them; they rush about; their legs are seized hold of by some of the smaller ants already affected by the poison, and they themselves begin to bite, and in a short time become the centre of fresh balls of rabid ants. The sublimate can only be used effectively in dry weather."

IN THE PARISIAN HIGH-LIFE, the great question of the day is the interesting discovery emanating from the celebrated Oriza perfumery; we mean the "Solid Perfumes," varying in twelve delightful odors, in form of Pencils and Pastils, and enclosed in coquette envelopes—indeed, a very charming bibelot of portable size. and an invention as agreeable as useful, sur-

rounding the wearer with bewitching scent. To perfume any article agreeably and instantaneously, simply rub upon them lightly. The "Ess Oriza Solid Perfumes" are sold by all good druggists and chemists of the United States; in Paris by the inventor, Mr. L. Legrand, Oriza Perfumery, 207 rue St. Honore, Paris. (General agents for the United States, Park & Tilford, 917-919 Broadway, New York.)

NOBODY EVER SEES THEM COME OR GO.—Those curious migratory birds, the martins, have already taken their departure southward, in anticipation of the approach of winter. There is something peculiar and mysterious in the migratory habits of the martin that is not observed in any of the other Southern birds that visit us to spend the summer months. They make their advent among us in their Northern migratory flight early in April, during the quiet hours of the night, and as mysteriously take their departure about the beginning of August for the South. No one has ever observed these birds arrive in daylight or take their departure; when expected here in the spring they are discovered some fine morning to have already arrived and taken possession of the little boxes arranged for them on many of the houses; and so also when the time arrives for their departure they disappear in the same manner, never being seen to congregate in flocks like other birds preparatory to taking their flight to their accustomed winter haunts.

TWELVE MOST FREQUENTLY QUOTED PASSAGES IN ENGLISH LITERATURE.

1. Brevity is the soul of wit (Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Act ii., Sc. 2).
2. To be or not to be, that is the question (*Hamlet*, Act iii., Sc. 1).
3. There is a tide in the affairs of man, which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune (*Julius Cæsar*, Act ii., Sc. 1).
4. Conscience doth make cowards of us all (*Hamlet*, Act iii., Sc. 1).
5. What's in a name? (*Romeo and Juliet*, Act ii., Sc. 2).
6. Fools rush in where angels fear to tread (Pope's *Essay on Criticism*).
7. Coming events cast their shadows before (Campbell's *Lochiel's Warning*).
8. The course of true love never did run smooth (*Mid-summer Night's Dream*, Act i., Sc. 1).
9. Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise (Gray's *Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College*).
10. Truth is stranger than fiction (Byron's *Don Juan*, Canto xiv.).
11. Distance lends enchantment to the view (Campbell's *Pleasures of Hope*).
12. A thing of beauty is a joy forever (Keats' *Endymion*).

HOW FAR CAN ONE SEE?—A discussion is going on in Europe concerning the distance at which large objects on the earth's surface may be visible. Emil Metzger mentions that he once saw, with some difficulty, Keizerspicket, in Sumatra, when distant 110 English miles; and he also made out Gug Merapi, in Java, when 180 miles away. From the Piz Muraun, near Disentis, E. Hill has seen Mont Blanc, the intervening space measuring about 110 miles. J. Starkie Gardner states that Mont Blanc is visible from the Piz Langard, though distant about three degrees. In Greenland, Mr. Whympier beheld a mountain from which he was separated by 150 miles; and from Marseilles, Zuch saw Mount Canigon at a distance of 158 miles. The whole range of the Swiss Alps has been looked upon by J. Hippisley while 200 miles away, while Sir W. Jones has affirmed that the Himalayas have appeared to view from 224 miles.

ÆRIAL BATTLES.—Doubtless the progress in aerostatics suggested to Tennyson the prophecy in "Locksley Hall," of aerial navies battling among the clouds, though the conflict of birds in mid-air may have colored the thought.

Not long ago the people of a German village were astonished to see a flock of eagles flying rapidly toward the mountains, pursued by a flock of storks. They watched until they saw the storks overtake the eagles, when such a fierce battle followed between pursued and pursuers that many dead storks and dead eagles fell to the earth. A writer describes an aerial fight which he saw between a hawk and a cat:—

"In front of my cabin at Marble Gap, on a high mountain side of the Cheoah range, are some tall trees with thick clusters of undergrowth, in which an old brindle cat makes her habitation, and where she has raised a family of kittens. Yesterday three large hawks were seen flying over the trees, evidently looking for prey. Presently one was seen to dash suddenly to the ground, seize a kitten, and make haste for her nest in the top of a tall poplar. The crying of the kitten in its aerial flight was distressing and pitiful, and the mother, now frantic with grief, watched the hawk with the vigilance that only an angry cat could command. When the hawk went to its nest with a feast for her young, the cat immediately ran up the tree, which was fully forty feet to the first limb, and in her desperate rage, sprang at the hawk, when a fearful fight ensued, during which the cat, hawk, kitten and young hawks were precipitated to the ground; fighting and squalling as they fell. The sudden contact with the earth caused each to break its hold, when the hawk flew up, only to be shot down by a guard on post near by, the cat being mistress of the situation, with a badly lacerated and broken-legged kitten, and the young hawks on which to feast her little family.

RUTHVEN'S PUZZLE PAGE.

Send all communications for this Department to
EDWIN R. BRIGGS, West Bethel, Oxford
County, Maine.

Answers to October Puzzles.

- 63.—Mango.
64.—A R R E T
R E A V E
R A V E N
E V E R T
T E N T S
66.—Rosemary.
65.—M O C H A
O C E A N
C E I L S
H A L V E
A N S E R
67.—Practice.

- 68.—Portent.
70.—Forbear.
72.—G
H O P
H A N S E
G O N D O L A
P S O R A
E L A
A
74.—Ernest.
76.—Edgar.
78.—Corn.
89.—Magnetic.
71.—Lashing.
73.—P
S I B
S C R I P
P I R A G U A
B I G O T
P U T
A
75.—Amy.
77.—Ida.
79.—Panache.

92.—Knight's Spring Acrostic.

ON	SHINES	SPO	THIS	ICI	WHILE	MUCH	A
REN	EX	UP	SUN	KEN	YEAR	TUDE	AND
MAKE	THIS	THEIR	HAVE	THEN	SEL	ONCE	RAY
PRES	CHILD	BY	LET	IMP	GREAT	GAY	THAT
MIRTH	THEIR	DAY	PLEA	JOY	THEM	BET	BUT
ING	SION	KEN	IST	HEAR	ULSIVE	THEY	BE
HAY	BE	WE	RUDE	SURE	THEIR	COMES	HEARTS
OFT	BOMP	CHR	TO	MAS	BY	AND	MIGHT

The acrostical letter advances the space of one letter in each successive line. MAUDE.

93.—A Diamond in a Diamond.

1. In ties. 2. A pronoun. 3. Fastenings. 4. Textures. 5. To fly or throw out. 6. Particular. 7. In ties.

Enclosed Diamond.

1. In ties. 2. A venomous serpent. 3. Conclusion. 4. A gentle noise made by a cat. 5. In ties.

CYRIL DEANE.

94.—A Square.

1. Show. 2. Certain serpents. 3. An animal that gnaws. 4. A reparation. 5. To caress. 6. Great regard.

CAPTAIN POSER.

95.—A Charade.

- The first is firm and solid;
The second is seen at sea;
The whole is oppression, or severe toil;
Now what may the answer be?

ADELAIDE.

Two Diamonds.

- 96.—1. A letter. 2. A pig-pen. 3. A French authoress. 4. More immovable. 5. A bird, genus *Lagopus*. 6. Lieverities. 7. Unimportant. 8. An Eastern title. 9. A letter.

- 97.—1. A letter. 2. To limit. 3. Point. 4. Games at cards. 5. An umpire. 6. Thinks. 7. A village of the Netherlands (Bij.). 8. Sees (Worc.). 9. A letter.

MAUDE.

Decapitations.

- 98.—Behead a kind of mushroom, and leave to fret.
99.—A lame person, and leave to fret on the surface.
100.—To flap the wings, and leave a carriage.

- 101.—To draggie, and leave a crowd of low people.

- 102.—To talk superficially, and leave to signify.

VERBENA.

103.—Progressive Enigma.

The whole, composed of ten letters, is the hand without the fingers. The 1, 2, 3, is come together. The 4, is a vowel. The 5, 6, 7, 8, is a fish. The 9, 10, is ourselves.

CYRIL DEANE.

Hidden Herbs.

- 104.—I left them in the yard.
105.—The gentleman is engaged.
106.—He is worthy more notice.
107.—Yet he is a general favorite.
108.—Though ever vain and foppish.

DINAH.

Answers in two Months.

Prizes.

For the first complete or largest list of correct answers to this month's puzzles, received before Dec. 10th, we offer an illustrated novelette; and for the next best list, a small book of poems.

Solvers.

Answers to the August puzzles were received from Katie Smith, Tunxis, Ida May, Vesper, Cyril Deane, Teddy, J. D. L., Birdie Browne, Vinnie, A. Mary Khan, Geraldine, Birdie Lane, Ann Eliza, Annie Kirkpatrick, Jack, Bridget McQ., Eulalie, Good Hugh, Cora A. L., I. O. T., Black Hawk, and Lillie Lee.

Prize-Winners.

Tunxis, Waterbury, Conn., for the largest list of correct answers. J. D. L., Philadelphia, Pa., for the next best list.

EDITOR'S DRAWER.

THINGS PLEASANT AND OTHERWISE.

RULES FOR SOCIETY.

You ask me for rules of society.

The following were given to me;
Alas! though they sound pretty simple,
I fail in each one of the three.

The first is the shortest, but hardest:

Forget yourself—dress, looks and all;
Not wishing you're stouter or thinner,
Less dark, or less fair, or less tall;
Forget, though your dress may be shabby;

Forget, too, the go of your hair;
Forgetting, in short, all about you,
Remember all else who are there.

Rule two is: *Think always of others,*

And when you are thinking be sure
To try and discover their *best* points;
Don't dwell on the faults they should cure.

If only you look and endeavor
You always may find something good;

The most disagreeable is never
Too utterly horrid and rude.

Remember this one has had trouble;
That other may have feeble health;
This man has been soured by poverty;
Another no less so by wealth.

These two are just the exceptions,
For out of the people you meet

You'll find only one who is sour
In proportion to ten who are sweet.
Thinking always the best things about them;
It will not be hard if you try—

And then you can always say truly,
"In this thing he's better than I."

The third rule is: *Make them all happy;*
Look around to see who is left out;

Cheer up the shy girl in the corner,
Amuse the old man with the gout;
Take care of that pale looking lady,
And mind that she's not in the draught,
But don't let her see what you're doing,
If needs be, with love mix some craft.

Talk politics now to the statesman,
Converse with another on trade,
Talk of home and friends to the lonely boy,
And of flowers and woods to the maid.

If ever you talk of people,
Remember the rule says "All,"
And you must not be entertaining one
At the cost of another's fall.

It's your mission to make all happy,
And never to drop a speech
That could carry sorrow to any heart,
Wherever your words might reach.

After all, it's the Bible maxim

That puts it shortest and best:—
"Be kind, be courteous, be full of love"—
You may safely leave the rest.

—*New York Observer.*

DOINGS IN SNOBVILLE.

"Why, how do you do, Mrs. Flouncer? What a stranger you have made of yourself?"

"I know it; and, Mrs. Ruffler, I've been dying to see you. But there, I've had so much to do that I haven't been able to go anywhere. Since my girl left me"—

"What, you don't mean that Maggie has left you?"

"Yes; isn't it provoking? And about such an aggravating thing, too!"

"Why, what could it have been? You got along so nicely together, too! But then any girl ought to be able to get along with you."

"That's what everybody says; but, as I was telling Mrs. Panier only yesterday, the more you make of them, the more you may."

"That's been my experience, 't any rate."

"Yes. Well, you know I'm a little particular about appearances—appearances are everything, you know—and I actually caught Maggie answering the door-bell without her white apron on!"

"You don't mean it!"

"As true as I sit here! And you know when she first came I told her never to go to the door without it. Well, the very next day the door-bell rang, and Maggie started right off without putting on her apron!"

"Why, I never heard of such a thing! But there, what can you expect of such creatures!"

"Sure enough. Well, I caught her coming back, and when I saw that she had disobeyed me, I said, just as pleasantly as I could, you know"—

"Of course."

"Just as pleasantly as I could, said I, 'Maggie, didn't I tell you to put on a white apron when you answered the door-bell?'"

"And what did she say?"

"Said she didn't think anything about it; she never'd been obliged to do anything of the kind in any of the other places where she had lived."

"For mercy's sake; whom could she have lived with? Certainly nobody in Snobville!"

"And she tried to excuse herself by saying that it was only the ragman."

"But the principle"—

"That's what I told her. 'The principle,' said I, 'is the thing. It might have been Doctor Jalap,' I said, 'or Mr. Proof-text, or Mrs. Panier, or it might have been my dear friend, Mrs. Ruffler.' Though of course I shouldn't have cared

so much if it *had* been you, you know, because you'd have known in a minute it wasn't my fault."

"Of course. But what did she say then?"

"Oh, she didn't say anything more. How could she?"

"Sure enough, how could she?"

"But she looked as though she'd like to answer me back."

"I'll warrant it, the impudent thing!"

"Impudent! You may well say that; for the very next day she did the very same thing again!"

"What! didn't put on the white apron? You don't mean it! Why I never heard of such wilfulness!"

"Just what Mrs. Panier says. As good luck would have it, it was only the grocer's boy. But then, the principle, you know."

"Certainly the principle's just the same. Of course you talked to her?"

"Yes; but she had her excuses ready—they always do, you know."

"Always."

"She said she knew it was the grocer, because she saw his wagon through the window."

"How artful!"

"That's just what she is. I had her only five days, Mrs. Ruffler, and she nearly wore the life out of me. I never saw her like."

"And you've had a good many."

"Yes, I've had a good many; but it isn't my fault that they don't stay. They're such an uneasy set—never content to stay anywhere long."

"I know it."

"And I'm always so kind with them, too. Sometimes I think I treat them better than they deserve."

"Be just like you."

"Well, that's what Mrs. Panier said. However, I can't help it. I'm just what I am, and if girls will take advantage of me, the worse is their own."

"But didn't she promise to do better?"

"Oh, she said she'd put the apron on and wear it all the time, then she couldn't forget it when she went to the door."

"Of course you couldn't allow that."

"Of course not. How it would look to see the cook in a white apron! I tried to explain to her that she was the parlor girl only when she answered the bell. But then it is impossible to make these creatures understand anything."

"I know it."

"But that very day she did something that I couldn't overlook."

"What was it? Something dreadful, I'll be bound, that you couldn't overlook."

"When Mr. Flouncer came home to dinner—we're obliged to dine at noon, you know, on account of his business."

"Yes, I know."

"Well, when Mr. Flouncer came home, he

went to the back door, as usual, you know, and he couldn't get in. It was locked, and Maggie couldn't find the key. That's what she said, but between you and me, I believe it was all done to worry me."

"How could she?"

"That's what Mrs. Panier said. And after I'd been so kind to her."

"The ungrateful thing!"

"So Mr. Flouncer had to go round to the front door—with his overalls and jumper on! Just think of it! I never was so mortified in all my life. Supposing somebody should have come along at that minute! I know I never should have got over it. It makes me tremble even now, when I think of it."

"What did Mr. Flouncer say? Wasn't he real provoked?"

"He must have been. But he only laughed when I spoke about Maggie, and said he didn't see anything the matter with her."

"Men are so blind!"

"So unfeeling, you mean! They don't care how much we poor women suffer. But I had got my mind made up and I told him that Maggie must go that very day."

"And what did he say to that?"

"Not a word. And that's what makes it so aggravating. It isn't enough to be put upon by one's servants, but even one's husband must side against her."

"But have you got another girl?"

"No, that's what I came to ask you about. If you hear of a girl who wants a good place, you'll let me know, won't you?"

"Yes, I shall be delighted. But must you go?"

"Yes. I haven't any girl now, you know."

"So you haven't. It's awful, isn't it?"

"Well, good-by, if you must go. But come again as soon as you can."

"Yes. Good-by."—*Boston Transcript.*

"Sure his mother should let out his coat for him, as Paddy Murphy had his breeches let out, sorr!" said the driver of an Irish jaunting-car. "And how is that?" "Well, sorr, Paddy Murphy, who lives in a cabin close by, wanted a pair of breeches. So he goes down to Peter McClogan, the tailor, who lives in the valley below, and says, says he, 'Peter, I want you to make me a pair of breeches.' 'Stand by' says Peter, 'and I will measure you.' So the breeches were made, and when sent home they were so small that Paddy could not get into them. Back he took them, and told Peter how vexed he was with them. 'You made my breeches too small, he says; 'you must let them out.' 'Well,' says Peter, 'leave them with me, and I will do that same for you.' So Pat left them to be let out. Time went by, and Peter did not send them back. So Paddy went down to the valley to see why he did not get them. As soon as he got to

the house, he saw the tailor digging potatoes, and he shouted out to him, 'Peter, have you let my breeches out' 'Faith, and I have!' says Peter. 'I've let them out for a shilling a week ever since you left them!'"

"This custom of making Christmas presents is getting to be a nuisance," said a man with a long nose to a *Chicago Herald* reporter. "It's being run to such an extent that a married man has to go broke about three months in the year, just for the sake of keeping his wife in good favor with the neighbors. I know a man and his wife up on Jackson street who take the proper view of this question. Whenever the wife wants a pair of lace curtains for Christmas, she makes a present of them to her husband, and when the old man thinks the piano would look better under a new covering, he buys the article and gives it to his wife. So you see that, while each receive a present from the other, both are beneficiaries, for the gift is invariably an article of household necessity or adornment."

Even ministers will have their joke. The Rev. Mr. A., of a certain Wesleyan chapel, invited the Rev. Mr. B. to preach one Sunday, and afterwards jocosely accused him of having sent a member of the congregation to sleep by his sermon. The minister smiled, and waited for an opportunity to retaliate. The next Sunday he sat with the congregation while Rev. Mr. A. preached, and was maliciously pleased at seeing one of the congregation enjoying a nap. After the service he mentioned the fact to his brother minister, who was by no means disconcerted by the information. "Yes," he replied, "I saw him. But that's the same man you sent to sleep last week. We haven't been able to wake him."

"I can't take that nickle," said a horse-car conductor, to a man who got in at the City Hall.

"Vot vos de matter mit dat goin?" asked the passenger blandly.

"It's no good. It's got a hole in it," replied the conductor, gruffly.

"Ist dot so? Off you please you show me dot holes."

"Look at it. We can't take any such money as that."

"Oxcuse me," said the passenger.

And he handed over a dime.

"That's worse yet," growled the conductor.

"Vos dot dime full of holes too?" asked the passenger, looking up innocently.

"Here's a whole side chipped out. We a'n't allowed to take mutilated money."

And the conductor handed it back.

"So?" inquired the passenger. "Haf you changes for heluf a tollar?"

And he passed over another coin.

"What's this?" asked the conductor contemptuously. "It's as bald as a deacon. There a'n't a scratch on it to show whether it's an overcoat button or a skating rink. av en't you got any money?"

"Vell, I should make smiles," said the passenger, good-humoredly. "Here is a fife tollar, and you can baste it together ven you get some leisures. Haf you got changes off dot fife tollars?"

And he handed over a bill torn in four or eight pieces.

"I don't want no more fooling," said the conductor. "If you can't pay your fare, get off."

"Vell, don'd make so many draubles. I vill bay you." And he pulled out a Mexican quarter. "Gif me bennies," he suggested.

"Look here, are you going to pay your fare or not?"

"Off gourse. May be you vas waiting for dot moneys."

And he took back his quarter and substituted an English sixpence.

"Now you get off this car!" roared the conductor.

"Vere has dese cars got by?" asked the passenger, rising to obey.

"North Ferry," said the conductor.

"Den I may as well got owit."

And the smiling passenger, having ridden to the end of the line, crossed the ferry, observing to himself:—

"Dot vas petter off I safe such moneys, und some dimes I go owit to East Boston und it don'd gost me no more as nodings at all."

A curious superstition was revealed during the performance of a marriage ceremony in a justice's office in Omaha. The magistrate had commanded the contracting parties to stand before him, and was about to begin the ceremony when a woman rushed in, and ordered the judge to stop a moment. The woman, who proved to be the bride's mother, looked at the carpet on the floor, and said:—

"Judge, I am a little superstitious; which way do the cracks run in this floor?"

This was a puzzler for the judge, but, being of an accommodating spirit, he ripped up about two yards of the carpet beneath his feet, and found that the seams of the floor ran crosswise of the feet of the young couple he was about to unite.

The position of the bride and groom was changed. The old lady gave a sigh of relief, and the ceremony proceeded. A mother-in-law so careful as that about the cracks in the floor is likely to make her son-in-law toe the mark every time.

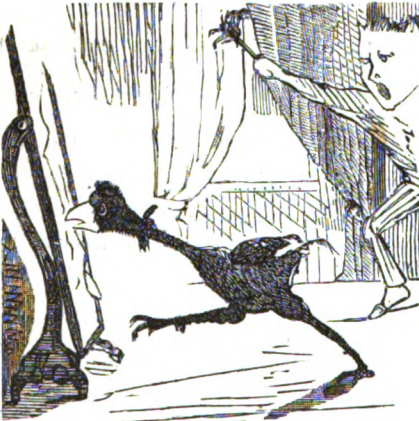
MR. FLINT'S CHRISTMAS PRESENT.



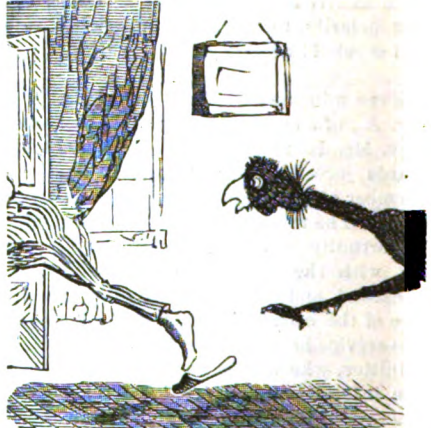
Christmas morning Mr. Flint receives a box by express. Charges, \$10.00.



Mr. F. opens the box, and finds a prize rooster which a friend has sent him.



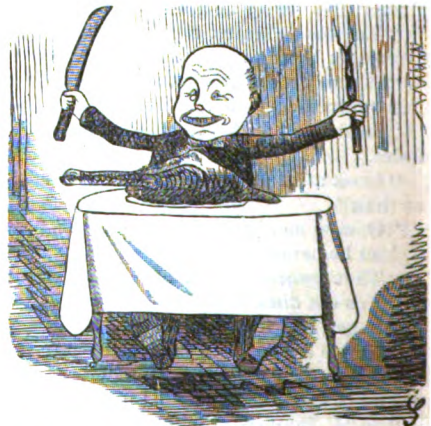
Belligerent propensities of the fowl. He sees a rival in the glass.



Great peril of Mr. F., who is pursued by the monster.



Mr. F. uses a little stratagem.



And for his Christmas dinner dissects the body of his present.